CHILDREN of FATE

OLPHE DANZIGER

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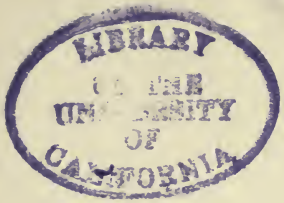
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CHILDREN OF FATE

By ADOLPHE DANZIGER

THE MONK AND THE HANGMAN'S DAUGHTER

(In Collaboration with Ambrose Bierce.)

IN THE CONFESSIONAL AND THE FOLLOWING

(Short Stories.)

A MAN, A WOMAN AND A MILLION

(London.)

JEWISH FORERUNNERS OF CHRISTIANITY

(New York and London.)

CHILDREN OF FATE

A Story of Passion

De Castro

BY

ADOLPHE DANZIGER

AUTHOR OF

"A MAN, A WOMAN AND A MILLION," ETC.

BRENTANO'S

NEW YORK

1905

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FRANK KINSEY, Esq.,
Marquette Building,
Chicago, Ill.

My Dear Frank:

When in July, 1884, you indicated to me my duty to this, my adopted country, I but little realized what that duty meant. I was then a stranger to its obligations and to the language in which you spoke. Later I keenly appreciated the importance of that first lesson, and during the eventful years that since have elapsed, I made an earnest effort to live up to the ideals which you then so eloquently portrayed.

But above and beyond these ideals stood and still stands the friendship that then arose. I have cherished it with ever increasing affection, and deemed it a capital from which I was not to draw the smallest part of its accumulating interest unless I was able to contribute my full share, for "friendship is reciprocal benevolence which inclines each party to be solicitous for the welfare of the other as for its own."

However, you were always in advance of me. Your splendid manhood, your loyalty, your unequivocal support of whatever I attempted, inspired me to act so as to merit the grace of your friendship, upon the altar of which I now lay this story, taken from life.

Accept then, my dear Frank, this volume, and may you derive as much pleasure from its contents as I have in giving it to you. *Ever yours,*
ADOLPHE DANZIGER.

New York, August, 1905.

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"Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab."

(Heinrich Heine.)

CHILDREN OF FATE

BOOK ONE.

CHAPTER I.

A MATTER OF OPINION.

It was four o'clock in the morning that Joseph Rosen, under-sexton of the Synagogue, stood on the door-step of his house, one of a row of squat little dwellings of the "Hinter Gass" in Dobrzyn, Poland.

His eyes swept the wondrous scene before him; he saw the golden glory that bathed the steeple of the Catholic Church, the flaming glow on trees and houses and fields, and his heart thrilled as the first lark seemed to burst her throat with song, mingling her piercing note with the music of tinkling sheep bells and the lowing of cattle.

Joseph listened, while the soft breeze fanned his face and stirred his hair that hung in long black locks.

"Are you glad, Joseph?" said a voice softly.

He raised his head, and the smile that had hovered on his lips turned into something more than a smile and became a benediction.

From a round window within the gable of the adjoining house there looked upon him a face which, lit up by the moving light that shone upon its perfect oval, its downcast long-lashed eyelids and delicate tint of ivory, appeared like one of Raphael's Madonnas set in a rough frame.

"Ah, it is you, Rachel; good morning," said Joseph.

"A good morning and a blessing upon you; how is your mother?" she asked.

"She is well, thank God," he said. "May peace be with you."

He raised his hand as if to bless, to shield, to implore, all in one.

The face above him reddened, the eyes lifted, the lips smiled; then the casement closed, and Joseph was alone. But there was no regret depicted in his face, nothing to indicate that he had more than a passing interest in what was perhaps a daily occurrence. Outwardly he appeared calm, if thoughtful. He shut the door noiselessly, not to disturb those within the house, then walked a short distance westward along the narrow street. Suddenly he called out:

"Ri-i-ise to Psalms!"

A multiple echo gave back its last sound, and through the narrow street there came something like the sigh of a satisfied sleeper.

Joseph called again in the same monotonous singsong, but there was no response; the ancient, iron-bound, heavy wooden shutters remained closed, and the pious in Israel thus summoned

to their early orisons evidently slept on undisturbed.

A third time Joseph called. He was now beyond Back Street, up to the post office stables, where, scattered about, a few Jews dwelt.

All at once another voice was heard; a moment later Joseph stood face to face with Kaminski, the policeman of the town.

"Ah-ee, Yushu, you call; you call, and the dog brothers—the Jews—sleep, they sleep; haw, haw, haw!"

The last sounds were those of an asthmatic cough that echoed through the empty street like thunder.

"Good morning, Pan Kaminski."

"Well, good morning, good morning," said the policeman. He was a big, bloated, choleric man, the personification of the domineering tyrant who brooks no interference and demands absolute obedience; but when Joseph bade him good morning, his red face seemed to soften and the great, bushy moustache trembled in an effort to show a smile.

"Bad business, Yushu, your calling the Jews and their not responding," he said.

"They will respond soon, Pan Kaminski; it is very early," the young man answered.

"As I love God, I would not serve such pigs," said the officer.

"You are serving the Russians, Pan Kaminski," Joseph responded, and a faint smile played on his lips.

The policeman's face turned purple; such a remark made by another would have led to serious consequences to the offender.

"Am I the less a Catholic because I am not fool enough to fight for a lost cause? It is better than serving a filthy race like yours. Go home, Yushu, and attend to your beans. I'll spring my rattle loud enough to make them think the Day of Judgment has come."

"Do not, I pray you, Pan Kaminski; they would be angry with me," said Joseph.

"Ah, 'tis for that alone that I do not strike them to the last man. As I love God, I would like to."

"But, Pan Kaminski, I am a Jew."

"Ha, ha, ha! Hear the boy! You a Jew! Mother of God, am I a Jew, Yushu, am I a Jew? You are no more a Jew than I."

"But you know my people and you have known me from my childhood; do not say such a thing again. I am a Jew, Pan Kaminski."

"May lightning strike me if you are a Jew. Though I hear you say so, and though I often get my share of the meats you bring from Jewish weddings, still I say you are not a Jew."

Joseph was silent. What could he say? He had no mind to irritate the policeman by further assertion, nor did he wish to fritter away his time when there were so many duties to which the day called him; so, without further parley, he again called out the plaintive summons to Psalms.

At this, the policeman sprang forward and, taking hold of Joseph's arm, said:

"Don't call the Jews, Yushu, don't call them."

"I must call them; it is my duty," was the calm reply.

"As I love God, you shall not call them," the policeman cried.

"But I must, Pan Kaminski, I must."

"Blood of Christ, who must when I say no?" he shouted, and held Joseph's arm fast.

Joseph looked at him with his great, sad eyes, and the angry officer dropped his hand as if it were struck down. Joseph walked away.

For a moment the officer gazed after the retreating form, then he heaved a sigh.

"Mother of God, did he strike me? Did he strike me?" he reiterated, froth gathering on his heavy lower lip.

"Who struck you, brother Kaminski?" asked the stage driver, who, with hair awry and sleep in his eyes, came from the post office stables.

Kaminski turned fiercely on him.

"Me, struck me? You are drunk, Janushek; who would dare to strike me?" he cried, and blinked his small, black eyes over the great brass-rimmed spectacles with the fierceness of an angry rat.

"But you were speaking to someone," Jan persisted.

"Of course I was, stupid; of course I was," said Kaminski.

"To whom?"

"To whom? Who else would be about the town before you went to feed your horses but Yushu?"

"The Jew who calls?" asked Jan.

"He calls, Janushek, but he is not a Jew."

"He is, Kaminski."

"You are the son of a sow, Janushek, and you have not enough brains to pull your leg through a fence," Kaminski said with contempt.

"I know that your mother barked at your birth, Kaminski; I am not a traitor," Jan retorted.

"You," cried Kaminski, and his thick neck swelled out enormously.

"You yourself," said Jan, unafraid.

Kaminski raised his fist to strike, but Jan fell upon him and in a moment the two held each other by the hair.

Silently, without a word, they pulled, setting their elbows against each other's breast. Neither sought to strike. Each was bent by the sheer force of the purchase he had on the other's hair, each pressing desperately on the other's breast to wear him out and force him to his knees. Both had their legs firmly planted and their heads almost touching.

Jan's elbows sank into the fat breast of the policeman as into dough, making him puff and groan.

Backwards and forwards they swayed, until Kaminski was gradually forced against the wall of the stables. This appeared to give Jan an advantage, for he forced the big man's head

down so that the pressure against the latter's double chin choked him.

Suddenly Jan's hands dropped; he sprang back, and between him and the policeman, who sank down limp and gasping, stood Joseph.

Jan gazed at him in speechless horror. Kaminski, who was slowly regaining his breath, crossed himself, and as he was getting to his feet, Joseph walked away.

The erstwhile combatants looked at each other, consternation depicted in their faces, then both stood still and listened. From the distance came the plaintive call of the under-sexton: "Ri-i-se to—Psalms."

Jan and Kaminski both made the sign of the cross.

"Mary, mother of God, have mercy on us," they said.

CHAPTER II.

A STATEMENT OF FACT.

"Is he a Jew?" asked Kaminski, putting on his cap.

"No Jew ever could do that," Jan rejoined. "But what is he?"

"Ugh, he says he is a Jew," said Kaminski.

"Then he must be," timidly remarked Jan.

"Must be," cried Kaminski. "Last month when the ice had broken and floated down the Vistula so that no one trusted himself to cross, my little Annusha, playing with other girls, fell into the river; I saw it and my soul went out of me. There were hundreds of people and many Jews, too, but no one made a move. And what did this boy do? He walked straight into the river and brought out my little girl just as she was sinking beneath one of the ice floes."

"Jesus, Mary! I did not know," said Jan.

"No, you were in Plotzk then. You remember the old Doctor Lerko who lived on the square?"

"Do I? Have I not waited on Rachelka his daughter whenever she went on my coach to Lipno, and would not I have cut off my head to serve her? But she had eyes only for that damned Russian officer, may the devils take him," cried Jan, and spat.

"Well, he left Rachelka with a souvenir," said Kaminski.

"A child?"

Kaminski nodded.

"I thought it would come to that when I saw them at the Fair in Belsk. But, you know, I was transferred to Lipno for a time and did not know what became of her. Ah, but she was pretty, and to think that she would throw herself away on a Cossack when there are so many good Polish Catholics here," said Jan sadly.

"Yes, she did throw herself away, but who can tell anything about a woman? Most women are like children. But this Rachelka was not at all like a Jewess; and her father was a great man, he spoke Russian like a Cossack, and her mother spoke Polish like one of us. I think she was no more a Jewess than you and I are Jews."

"Impossible," cried Jan.

"Quite true, and the Jews claimed them, too, for she was good to the poor; but when Rachelka's child was born they made a great noise and wanted to kill her."

"Where is she now?" asked Jan.

"Stick a carrot in your mouth for an answer," said Kaminski, winking his eye.

Jan looked about him. If he had dared he would have throttled the policeman till he gave him the desired information, but a nameless fear had hold of him.

"Mother of God, one is not safe," he mur-

mured. But Kaminski misunderstood his meaning.

"I sometimes think the same," he said. "But no one knows. Well, one day it happened that I was coming down this very street and saw the vile Jewish scum chase Rachelka."

Jan jumped as if stung by a viper.

"Mother of God, they chased her!" he cried.

"And threw mud and stones at her," the other continued.

Jan spat in a passion of disgust.

"The vermin!" he cried. "I'll get even with them."

"She ran like a deer, but they came from all sides and she sank down."

"My God!" cried Jan, gritting his teeth, "and you looked on?"

"I was so amazed they dared to do this in my presence, that for a moment I stood still. As I was about to charge them with my sabre, Yushu, as if sprung from the earth, stood in front of her. They threw mud and sticks at him and demanded that he should give her up."

"Did he?" asked Jan tremblingly.

"He stretched forth his hands to protect her and then I ran up full charge and the scum dispersed."

"Holy Virgin save us! I am afraid of that Jew," said Jan.

"There is a mystery about him, that is certain," said the policeman; "but he is very good."

Jan made no response; he was perplexed.

Of a sudden an idea seemed to have struck his mind, and putting the left hand on his forehead, he put his right in his pocket.

"I had almost forgotten," he said, pulling out a bottle of vutki. "I brought it from Lipno, and meant to give you a drink this very morning."

The eyes of the policeman glistened.

"Oh, Janushek, brother, how could you be so forgetful?" he said reproachfully, and took the proffered bottle.

Having taken a long draught of the precious liquid, he smacked his lips and gave the bottle back to Jan, who in his turn took a long draught.

"By the way, Janushek," said Kaminski, and his voice had a ring of gratitude, "the Pultava regiment is coming this way again."

"When?" cried Jan excitedly.

"To-day," said Kaminski.

"Are they going to quarter here or are they just passing through?" asked the stage driver.

"Passing through. See, the Jews are going to the Synagogue; it is time for you to attend to your horses," said Kaminski.

"My horses are all right," said Jan. "Why are the soldiers coming this way, Kaminski?"

"I don't know," answered the policeman.

From the wink in his eye it was evident that he did know, but he also knew that he must not talk too much to Jan, who was a tattler and frequently gave the policeman important information. Thus, for example, it was Jan who had

told him that there was going to be a political meeting of the nobles in that part of the country, and that the meeting was fixed for this very Friday in the city of Vlotzlavek. Kaminski had told the Burgomaster, who sent word to Plotzk, and the Governor sent the Pultava regiment to Vlotzlavek.

It was well for Kaminski that Jan had no inkling of the matter, else the knife instead of the vutki had gone into the traitor's body. But Jan's thoughts were upon a different matter.

"The Cossack will come and he will take Rachelka. Tell me, brother, where she is. I want to protect her," he cried.

The policeman grinned broadly.

"Rachelka does not need your protection, brother Janushek. But I don't know. Perhaps she is here or maybe she is in Plotzk, perhaps she is in Vlotzlavek or in Warsaw. Yushu, I think, knows; there he goes, ask him, brother," said the policeman.

Jan looked in the direction indicated and made a move as if to follow, but Joseph had already disappeared behind one of the houses.

At this moment both were startled by the sight of two soldiers at the extreme end of the road.

"They are here," said the policeman.

"Mother of God, protect us," cried Jan, and went hastily into the stables, while Kaminski walked slowly toward the square.

CHAPTER III.

A MERE ACCIDENT.

When the policeman saw Joseph, the latter was not walking as usual, slowly and with bowed head, but was running. If the policeman thought this extraordinary he must have had his reasons for concealing it from the stage driver. More likely he did not know, for he went in a direction different from that taken by Joseph.

The latter ran behind one of the houses, peeped cautiously back to see if he were followed and then, running through the passageway, entered his own house from the back. He hastily climbed to the attic and opening a casement in the gable called out softly:

"Rachel, Rachel!"

In a moment the window opposite opened, and the face of the young woman appeared.

"What is it, Joseph? Oh, why are you so pale? What has happened? How is your mother?" she cried.

"Be calm, Rachel; nothing has happened to me, and mother is well. But tell me, do you still love him?" he whispered.

The face opposite flushed to a deep red.

"Why do you ask? You know that long ago I gave up hope and love," she said.

"Yet he may call you, and if he does you must

follow him, although under the Russian law you cannot be his wife."

As Joseph said this the face above him turned ashen; it worked convulsively as in anguish, but the eyes remained tearless and even grew hard as she asked:

"Do you think he knows that law?"

"He must; he is an officer. You must decide quickly, for he is here," said Joseph.

"My God!" cried the woman, "when did he come? Is he alone?"

"No, he is with his regiment. He will search for you and find you. It will be for sin, for he does not love you as a wife. He has deceived you; decide."

"I will not see him," she said. "I would rather die."

"You shall not die. God is merciful; come, get ready," said Joseph softly.

"Where shall I go? Where shall I hide?" she asked.

"The graveyard is a good place to hide until the regiment has gone away; but veil yourself closely."

The casements closed, and soon afterwards Rachel stepped through the back door into the garden, where Joseph joined her. Screened by the high grass which filled a dip in the ground, they reached unobserved the eminence where the Jewish burial ground was situated. But no sooner were they at the top than they saw an officer on horseback. He was gazing across the

majestic Vistula that in the morning sun looked like a moving, myriad-rippled flame. Beyond was the brilliant forest, deepening to a dark blue in its recesses, with here and there open spaces where pretty peasant houses, white-walled and red-roofed, gleamed in the sunshine.

The amazed and frightened couple stood still. It seemed as if fate had planned the encounter, or with less faith Rachel might have thought that Joseph had contrived the meeting. But she had no time for thought; she recognized the officer at a glance and that caused her a weakness which she could scarcely conquer.

"Down, quick," Joseph whispered.

But it was too late, the officer turned, he saw them and at once rode toward them.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"I am a Jew," said Joseph.

"I can see it; who is this woman?"

"An unfortunate," Joseph answered.

"Is she young? Remove your veil, woman," the officer commanded.

Rachel trembled violently.

"She must not remove her veil," said Joseph.

"Silence, Jew."

"Leave her in peace, my lord. See how she trembles."

"Silence," cried the officer, "and you, Jewess, obey!"

Rachel straightened, and with a quick movement put aside her veil.

"Rachelka!" cried the officer.

Her body quivered at the sound of the name, but she made no move.

"Rachelka!" the officer repeated.

She appeared not to hear.

"Leave her, my lord, she is only a Jewess," said Joseph.

The officer grew red in the face.

"Is she your wife?" he asked.

"She thinks she is your lordship's wife," Joseph said, and calmly gazed in the officer's eyes.

"And why did you bring her here?" he asked, grinding his teeth.

"To save her from evil."

"Insolent Jew, I'll teach you——"

He raised the riding whip to strike.

Rachel uttered a cry, but Joseph looked at the Russian unafraid.

"What boots it to strike a Jew? You have struck us so often that we are used to it. You have deceived, defiled and forsaken this poor woman; leave her in peace now; do not again lead her to ruin, more deeply and irredeemably."

"Silence, you chattering idiot," cried the officer, springing from his horse.

Joseph did not move.

The officer measured the tall, commanding figure of Joseph.

"I suppose you think it is better for her to live with filthy Jews than to go with me?" he said with a sneer.

"Yes, if she cannot go as your wife," was Joseph's reply.

"That cannot be," said the officer curtly.

Rachel shivered.

"Then your marriage was a mockery," cried Joseph, and pointing to a little mound near the wall he added: "Do you see that little heap of earth? It is the grave of your child, the fruit of your sin—not of hers, for she was innocent and did not know."

"Enough, filthy Jew!" the officer cried, stepping toward her. "Rachelka, come with me to Vlotzlavek."

But Joseph put himself between him and the girl.

"Don't touch her; it were better she died this instant than be defiled by you a second time," he cried.

"Die, you dog," cried the officer and his sword flashed in the sunlight.

Rachel sprang forward and the blade pierced her breast.

It was the work of a moment, but it worked like a spell upon the enraged officer. He was transfixed. At last he realized what he had done and throwing away his sword, he knelt by the side of the stricken girl.

He opened her dress, and with his handkerchief sought to stem the flow of blood. He called her by endearing names, but her senses were gone; she neither heard nor saw.

Joseph stood by with bowed head; his lips moved in prayer.

"Fetch a doctor, quick," said the officer.

Joseph hastened away. Near the hollow he stopped.

"Father in heaven, have mercy! Have mercy, Lord!" he cried.

Standing there in the shadow, with the sun shining on his uplifted face and raised hands, he looked like one of those rare paintings in which a master hand has put the agony of the whole world into the features of a Christ. A moment he stood, as if listening to the echoes of the prayer he had breathed, then he hastened away, and all was still.

CHAPTER IV.

AN INCIDENT.

The burial ground was on the road to the beautiful town of Vlotzlavek, which was, at the time the incidents in this story took place, a centre for the meetings of the Polish nobles, who, although continually harassed by the Russian police, continued their agitation for independence.

On the very Friday on which Rachel was struck down, a regiment of Russian soldiers marched into the town, surrounded the great hall in the Old Square, and there and then arrested five hundred nobles. Many were at once sent to Siberia, others were publicly flogged and sent to the German frontier. A goodly number escaped punishment, owing in part to their absence from the meeting, but mainly because the list of names of the patriots had been lost.

Amongst those to whom fate had been particularly kind that Friday was the widow, Baroness Levanovska, an ardent patriot, very wealthy and very capricious, who lived at Castle Wysiniaski, an old building of noble proportions.

The meeting of the nobles had been called for an early hour, and the Baroness, seated in an open barouche, was being driven to Vlotzlavek, the road to which led through Dobrzyn and past

the old Jewish burial ground.

Suddenly a glint of light caught her eyes. Ordering the carriage to stop, she took the reins and told the driver to see what was going on at the burial ground. He came back running and terribly agitated.

"There is a Russian officer up there," he whispered. "I think he has killed some one."

The Baroness threw him the reins and stepped from the carriage. She walked briskly up the incline to the gate and soon was bending over the stricken girl.

"What has happened?" she asked.

"Has the Jew come with the doctor?" the officer inquired, staring like a madman.

"What has happened?" the Baroness repeated.

"A terrible accident," he replied; "bring help, as you are a woman, I beg you, else she will die."

"There is no time to be lost then; hurry and carry her outside; my carriage is there and I will take her home," said the Baroness.

He lifted the inanimate form of Rachel and carried it down the incline. As he moved away, the Baroness noticed a small white package on the ground. She bent down, picked it up, and, hiding it in her dress, followed. Having taken her seat, she told the officer to place the girl by her side, so that she might support her. Ordering the driver to take the garden road to the Castle, she bade the officer hurry to the doctor in Dobrzyn and tell him to come at once to Castle

Wysiniaski. The officer looked up quickly.

"Baroness Levanovska, I presume?"

"Yes, sir; now go quickly and call the doctor," she said.

"Pardon, madame la Baronne, it will be impossible for me to do this; I must join my regiment. Adieu, madame," he said, and walked away. He ran to the graveyard, picked up his sword, and as he buckled it on gazed after the fast disappearing carriage.

"How unfortunate," he murmured; then his brow clouded. "Curse that dog of a Jew," he said and gritted his teeth. A moment later he was on his horse and dashed away on the road to Vlotzlavek.

Joseph and the doctor walked hurriedly toward the burial place. In a few words he told the physician what had happened; but the latter listened with but little attention. Joseph had called him at the moment he was about to leave for Vlotzlavek. But when Joseph mentioned that the Pultava regiment was on its way to that city, and that the officer was the colonel himself, the doctor stood still.

"Are you sure the regiment is going to Vlotzlavek?" he asked.

"I am sure," said Joseph. "I saw them on the road, and I heard the colonel himself say that he was going to Vlotzlavek."

"Rather imprudent to tell everyone of his movements," the doctor rejoined, and a smile played on his lips.

"It was so ordered; God be praised for all things!" said Joseph.

"This matter of ordering has not been fully settled by science; but, however it came about, it was a very lucky arrangement. You have put me in good humor; now let us hasten."

But Joseph stopped.

"There is the officer; he is riding to Vlotzlavek. Go quickly," said he, and walked away, while the doctor hurried to intercept the carriage.

CHAPTER V.

LOVE LETTERS.

"Will she live?" asked the Baroness eagerly, when they had reached the Castle and the doctor had examined Rachel's hurt.

"There are no vital organs affected; but she had a narrow escape. If no complications arise she will be well in a month," said the doctor.

"You must try all means to prevent complications," the Baroness rejoined.

The doctor gave her a quick look.

"Politics?" he asked.

"Perhaps that and something else," she said evasively. "I am interested in her."

"But I should like to know the reason for this solicitude, providing it rests on political grounds; for others I do not care," he said.

"You may know both," said the Baroness, "and the chances are you will care as much as I do. To begin with, did you know that Dr. Lerko was baptized a Greek Catholic?"

"I surmised it; otherwise he could not have been a high military official in the Russian army," the doctor replied.

"And did you know that his wife was a Catholic, who lived as a Jewess, and was a baroness in her own right?" she asked.

"That is certainly news," he rejoined.

"Yes, and I dare say you did not know that Colonel de Prussnitzki of the Pultava regiment was married to this young woman, who bore him a child?" the Baroness continued, enjoying the amazement of the doctor at this recital.

"And how did you get behind all that so quickly, dear Baroness?" he asked.

But she was bent on tantalizing him a little longer.

"Nor did you know that some one had furnished the Governor with a full list of names, mine and yours included, of the people who were to meet this morning at Vlotzlavek; and, but for this girl, we might now be manacled and on our way to Siberia," she said.

"I have received an inkling of this through the young Jew who called me. But then, if there be a list, which I greatly doubt, it is only a question of time how soon the soldiers will be here," the doctor said. "But, pray, tell me how did you find out all about the Lerkos?"

"Read these letters; they are marked, as you see, according to numbers," she said, handing him three letters.

He opened the first.

"Ah, French," he said, and this is what he read:

"My Well-beloved! My Life! Dearest Vladimir:

"It seems to me that a century has passed since you left. I did not believe that there was so much suffering in store for me; that life

would be so very dark as it has seemed since you went away and I no longer can look into your eyes and rest my head on your breast. The sun has lost its brightness, the days are full of gloom, and in my solitude I can only weep and weep for my lost happiness. I love you, I love you more than any being on earth, more than my life, more than my soul and its salvation. I love you, I love you!

"There is indeed no grief so keen as to recall in misfortune the happiness we once enjoyed. Each time I think of the happy moments you and I were together, beloved, I feel the most poignant pain.

"I thank you for the exquisite sweetness of love you have taught me, and I pray God that I may die the moment doubt of your love for me enters my soul; that would be to experience a greater torture than I now suffer from your absence.

"I love to recall the moments of our first meeting; when I saw you, love came to me like the glory of the sunrise, waking my dormant soul to a life it had never known. Each night, while you and my father talked, my heart went out to you for the gentle manner and respect with which you treated him. It was at that time I learnt that my father had been baptized in the Greek Catholic faith, having been abducted in childhood and educated in the Russian military academy. Later, when invalided, he was given permission to live in the city of Warsaw,

where he met the Baroness Gurakovska, my own dear mother. At the time they met my father was neither Jew nor Christian, and my mother did not take religion into account with her love. And yet my father had so strong a leaning to his own people that he persuaded my mother to be married according to Jewish rite. When they finally came to this, his birthplace, to live, he associated with the old Jewish families as if religious differences had never existed. They of course did not know of my mother's Christian origin, and with the exception that people sometimes said she was "Gentile-like," no one ever suspected that she was not a Jewess by birth. My father's position did not admit of any severe criticism on the part of the Jewish community; they looked upon him as one with whom it was well to be circumspect, as they often sought and always received his help.

"My parents lavished their entire affection on me, their only child. My father taught me the sciences, and my mother languages. She often told me that I must be accomplished, as some day she would take me to see my aunt, who, she said, held a high position in Warsaw.

"Then you came.

"Oh, how every nerve in my body thrills when I think of that day. Lover of my soul, how was it possible not to love you, and how could I resist the wondrous charm of your words when you told me you loved me? They rang in my soul like the rarest harmonies, and I yielded.

"Beloved, do you remember the little church in Belsk, where I vowed to love you all the days of my life? Perhaps it was a sin not to marry according to the laws of my faith, for I am a Jewess, but God is the Father of all, and the love He gives He Himself has sanctified. I knew and felt it when I gave myself to you, my lover, my husband.

"I know you will come back to me, but I pray God that it be soon, for I cannot live without you. I love you, I love you, I love you.

"I have named a beautiful rose bush in our garden, 'Vladimir.' Daily, when I go to water it, I kiss the leaves and the buds. I break none, because it seems to me that it would hurt you if I broke one.

"I send you my heart and my love. I kiss you with the tenderest and most passionate kisses. I kiss your eyes and your soft lips. My lover, do you not feel the warmth of my embrace, the beating of my heart? You surely must, for my life is bound up with yours. I cannot think of myself as living without your love. I know not how to worship my God better than by breathing your name and asking a blessing upon our love.

"I live in the atmosphere your love has created for me; waking, your name is on my lips, and sleeping I dream of you, my beloved, my life. I feel that deeper than the sea, higher than heaven, and stronger than death, is the love of

"Your

"Rachelka."

When the doctor had finished reading he looked at the Baroness in speechless wonderment.

"I thought you would be interested," said she.

"Interested!" he cried. "Why, this is the rarest love letter I ever read in all my life, and he a Russian."

"A woman's heart cares for nothing else when it loves; it does not stop to analyze," the Baroness rejoined.

"It seems so," said the doctor. "But let us see what follows," and, opening the second letter, he read:

"Adored Vladimir:

"Four months have passed; an eternity, it seems to me. I have not heard from you, yet I write again. I know that you are on duty and may be hindered from writing; still I must write; I must free my soul from the pressure that fate has laid on it. Not that I doubt your love, but I am sad because you are away. I long for you with a passion for which I can find no words.

"I am orphaned now, my father having died suddenly on the very night I sent my first letter to you. A few days after, the Burgomaster's wife brought me the news that your regiment was ordered to the Caucasus for the manœuvres. This knowledge came over me like a pall. For weeks I was like one in a dream, a dreadful dream, and, despite my mother's effort to engage

my attention in work, study, or conversation, I could not rid myself of the terrible pressure that held my heart as in a vice. As if my sufferings were not great enough, an attempt was made to make them greater.

"One day a man—a professional matchmaker —came to see my mother and told her that he had made all the necessary arrangements to betroth me to the son of a rich man from Plotzk, who had arrived in town. I nearly fainted. When I regained my self-possession, I told the man that I would not marry any one.

" 'Not marry!' he cried. 'Jewish girls must marry; it is the law.'

" 'But I don't want to marry, and I don't love the man,' I said.

" 'Love, love!' he cried. 'What is love? Who wants love? We are not Gentiles, whose acts spring from the evil passions of their hearts. We marry because it is the law and a woman must marry.'

"My poor mother winced at his speech; I saw that she was afraid. But my heart rebelled. I told him I did not want to marry and went from the room.

"The man stayed a while, then I saw him leave. He appeared very angry. I did not mind this, for I took no more heed of his words than of a flitting fly. However, the excitement made me ill. I went back to mother and, lying in her arms, I soon fell asleep.

"And even while I was sleeping, it seemed to

me that I heard my mother weep. I opened my eyes, and my mother's tears were falling fast. I threw my arms about her neck and begged her not to sadden herself because I did not want to marry. But she cried more keenly while her slender white hand soothed my aching head.

" 'My little dove, my own,' she said, 'you need not marry if you do not wish, but tell your own mother, Rachelka, do you love any man, my own lamb, tell me, do you?'

"I threw myself at her feet and told her my heart's secret.

"And as I spoke there came a great ringing in my ears, the blood rushed to my head, I felt as if I were lifted by unseen hands into space, and I saw myself lying at my mother's feet. Around me I seemed to see a group of celestial beings who pointed at an object so beautiful, so wonderful that from it a glory seemed to shine over all the world. At this a great yearning to see seized me, and, descending among the angels, I asked them to tell me the mystery.

" 'It is thy child,' they said in chorus, and the music of their words was re-echoed throughout the entire universe, so high and holy is the first step of motherhood.

"Oh, my beloved Vladimir, I did not know that I had become pregnant with life until my mother's eyes, keener than my knowledge, until her tears, as merciful as love itself, revealed to me the holy secret.

"But she wept and sighed and told me she feared evil days were in store for me.

"I am glad, however; for God surely gave me this great blessing to make my heart joyous. May He bring you back to me, beloved, for I need your strength and your support.

"Your own for life and beyond,

"Rachelka."

CHAPTER VI.

LOVE LETTERS CONTINUED.

The doctor's excitement was so intense that he did not venture any comment. He hastily opened the third letter and read:

"Vladimir:

"I write this letter in a garret. I am in hiding; have been in hiding for weeks. I am without the means to get away from this town. I dare not come forth to claim my own property, as there is not a person of influence among the Jews in this town who would stand by me to see that I am not molested. Were it not for one who has been as a brother to me, I should have ended this miserable existence.

"Now, alas, I recall with pain and remorse the words of my poor mother when she told me that days of evil were in store for me. The evil is here and the days have become one long night as dark as my soul, as chill as my heart.

"I do not live in the present; the present is grief, so keen that it often seems I must die of its sheer keeness. Yet I am fated to live. Why? I can see no glint of future happiness. Everything appears to me like a dream. You, in whom I placed supreme confidence, are far, far away. Is your soul, too, far away? Have you read my

letters that I sent to Plotzk to be forwarded? Will you read this? Will you have pity on the girl who trusted you, or can it be that you do not love me? I shall not believe so horrible a thought. Let this letter witness my faith in you, my husband. Perhaps, when you read the sufferings I have undergone, you will hasten to me.

"I wrote you in my last letter how I was made aware that motherhood awaited me. The days that followed were of ineffable bliss. I tried to measure my capacity for affection for that life which was part of myself, but it seemed limitless.

"When my condition could no longer be concealed, our misery began. I could not leave the house without fear of being molested by the Jewish children and old women. My mother, who felt the distress more keenly than I, grew weaker from day to day. I was less affected by their jeers. I had done nothing wrong. I was the wife of one not of my faith, but somehow my conscience did not smite me. I even grew more joyous as the days passed, and my joy spread its calming influence. Even the urchins and the cantankerous old women, as they passed our house, seemed to feel the contagion of our gladsomeness.

"One day, as I sat at the piano—for my music soothed me strangely—there came upon me something like a flash of fire that seemed to envelope me and burn me to the very heart. My

fingers, running over the keys, played music no master had composed, notes that sounded defiance to earthly sorrow and sadness. Every minute a million-voiced chorus seemed to sing an anthem that rolled on in great waves of music, and with each stirring of the precious life within me, my very soul thrilled in rapturous response.

"I was carried away in a whirl of the most intense emotion; I was keyed up to the highest pitch of that mysterious joy that is as much beyond human understanding as some rare colors are beyond the capacity of human vision, or some acute notes in music beyond the grasp of human hearing. So intense had this joy become, it so thrilled and lifted me, it so embraced me, that while my fingers still moved on the keys of the piano, it forced one bitter cry from me, one agonized call, and then I felt myself falling, falling into cool and still space.

"When I awoke I was on my bed, a woman was bending over me, and my mother was fondling my hand, upon which her tears were falling. The momentary relaxation felt so sweet that I abandoned myself fully, thinking nothing, feeling nothing, desiring nothing. Gradually there came a slow concentration, physical and mental. I began to think of you, to long for you; I desired to be happy, to be free of pain, and as my mind centred upon these thoughts, I heard again the great volume of music; the whole universe seemed full of melody—so full

that I felt the tension could last no longer and that it must burst and go to pieces.

"Sounds seemed to start from my feet and run with quick, sharp notes up to my heart, thence to my brain. My body felt like a harp over which the tense nerves were strung, to be struck from time to time by a giant hand with passionate force. And each time it smote the world was filled with so mighty a harmony that I was forced to cry out with ecstasy. Then there came a rush of sound in which all joy and all grief were mingled; it overpowered me, and with a lingering cry I sank into darkness and silence.

"How long this silence lasted I do not know, but when I opened my eyes the intensity of the feeling had given way to a calm and profound peace; in my arms lay all the world—our child.

"I cannot recall every thought that passed through my brain when I heard its first cry. I know I thought of you with infinite sweetness of gratitude, and prayed God to bring you back to me, that I might put into your arms the holiest token of our love, the dear son I bore you.

"My mother sat by my side. She kissed my hand and hot tears fell from her eyes.

"Why did she weep? Alas, I found out later why she wept.

"Eight days after the child's birth, they came to perform the rite of circumcision, which, my mother said, would cause the Jewish community to pardon my sin.

"My sin! I was not conscious of any sin and desired no forgiveness. But my inexperience in the ways of the world and the prejudices of men was too great to let me judge of the consequences of what was deemed my crime.

"Soon, however, I forgot everything in adoration of my treasure. It was lovely to look at. Then of a sudden it fell ill, and, even as I looked at it, it began to fade away. Three months after its birth, the last vestige of my happiness passed out of my life; my child died, and as they grudged it honor even in death, it was buried near the wall of the cemetery.

"On my return from the graveyard, a band of boys and girls met me. They hooted and jeered, they called me vile names, they threw mud at me, they beat me, pulled my hair and tore my clothes.

"Wild with grief and torture, I ran, ran, toward the river. I wanted to end a life that held no joy.

"As I rushed down the hill to the water, a young man standing near it spread out his arms and barred my way.

" 'What are you about?' he asked.

" 'Let me go, oh, let me go! They will kill me!' I cried.

" 'They will not,' he said. 'Turn and go home, Rachel. You must be brave. God has put a burden upon you and you must bear it for your mother's sake.'

"His words quieted me wonderfully. He was

the under-sexton of the Synagogue. I had seen him often, for he came to our house every Friday afternoon rattling a tin box into which my mother used to throw a few coppers. I had never noticed him particularly, but now, as he spoke to me, I felt an awe in his presence. He seemed like one I had never known until this moment. He looked so strong in his manhood, yet so pale and so spiritual, so much of a man and so much more like an angel, that my soul sank in humility and obedience to him.

"'I will go home if you say I must,' I said.

"'Go home, and peace be with you. The pain that man gives is as nothing to the pain that comes from one's own heart and conscience,' he said.

"I went back. But no sooner did I enter the street than I was met by a mob of young and old. Oh, the tortures that I endured! At length I made my way to our house, and there, alas, a greater misfortune awaited me. Unable to sate its fury on me, the mob had besieged the house. They called my mother vile names and threw mud and stones at the windows. I found my mother on the floor; she was unconscious and blood streamed from her mouth.

"My cries for help brought several persons to the house, amongst them the Jewish barber who had been a surgeon's assistant during the war. He pronounced her dead. At this, the women fell to cursing me, saying I had killed my mother by my disgrace. I took no notice of their curses;

grief had dulled my senses, and when, on the following day, they took away the body, they warned me not to follow it to the grave.

"But when all of them were in the Synagogue, I stealthily made my way to the burial ground. All night I wept at the grave, and prayed the dear one to take me to her. Frequently I thought of going down to the river to end my life; but each time the words of Joseph rang in my ears, 'God has put a burden upon you and you must bear it.'

" 'But they make my life miserable beyond endurance,' I would argue. Then I seemed to hear him say, 'The pain that man gives is as nothing to the pain that comes from one's own heart and conscience.'

"Alas, my conscience did smite me then. But I silenced it, and in deepest agony I cried out, 'Punish me, Lord, chastise me, only bring me back my lover, my husband.'

"Thus I wailed until the sun broke forth and all around me appeared as if bathed in flame. Then came the grave-digger's wife.

" 'Panna Rachelka! As I love God, it is my mistress, the Panna Rachelka! Oh, you are cold! Come into the house. I will give you a glass of tea,' she cried, and taking me in her arms as if I were a child, she carried me into the house and put me to bed. She gave me tea to drink, and then I fell into a dull sleep.

"When I awoke it was late in the afternoon. I rose quickly and, giving the children a few

coppers, I went away. Ill luck would have it that the Jews just then came from the Synagogue. In a moment they surrounded me.

"'Rachel, Rachel, will you have a soldier?' they shouted; 'look at the brazen-faced harlot! Kill her, drive her into the river! Renegade! Harlot! Unclean beast!'

"They cuffed and kicked me, they bespattered me with mud, they pulled my hair, until I sank to the ground. I prayed God to forgive me my sins; I was ready to die. But He would not have it so, and in my supreme distress sent me a saviour. Joseph, pushing through the crowd, placed himself in front of me.

"'Go away!' he cried; 'if she be guilty, she will answer to God. Are you so good that you have the right to punish those whom you deem bad? Go away!'

"'Hear the beggar,' they cried. 'He insults the community that supports him. Give it to him!'

"At this there came a perfect storm of mud, sticks and stones. He bent over me to protect me, and I know that he was struck several times.

"'Come, Rachel, we must run. They are mad and are not accountable for their acts. If we stay we may cause them to commit murder,' he said.

"And so I got up, and, under cover of his body, ran with him. As we ran, I heard the voice of Kaminski, the policeman, but we did not turn. A few moments later I was at the widow

Rosen's little cottage, and, no sooner was I inside than all became dark before my eyes. When I came to myself Joseph took me to his mother's room.

"'Mother dear, this is Rachel, the doctor's daughter; she is in distress.'

"My nerves were so unstrung that I broke out sobbing.

"'Poor child, they have ill-treated you,' she said. 'Ah, man is more cruel in his judgment than God would have him be.'

"Her words brought the whole burden of my misery before me. Cruel! Ah, yes, man is cruel; but is God kind? Why had He taken everything my soul cherished? In sheer agony I cried out: 'I am miserable, miserable!'

"'Rachel, there are people in this world more miserable than you,' said Joseph.

"'Impossible; what creature could be more wretched than I am?'

"'Those who threw mud and stones at you a few moments ago,' he said.

"At these words a light came into my soul, and I was made to understand. My tears ceased to flow and a sudden lightness buoyed me up.

"'God bless you, Joseph,' I said; 'I will try to be strong.'

"'It is well to remember that God's mercy is without end. Whether you have sinned or not, it is not for man to judge. However great your fault, God's mercy is greater. Rest here or next door. Aunt Leah will give you the garret. No

one will look for you there. Aunt Leah is discreet and she will see to your comfort,' he said, and left the room.

"My heart bowed in humility to God for this marvelous salvation, and in deep thankfulness I kissed the hand of the blind woman.

" 'Fear nothing, little one,' said she, pressing me to her bosom; 'my son will protect you. God's grace is upon him and his words are as the words of a saint.'

"I glanced around the room of the woman who was reputed to be so very poor that her son was not given the advantage even of a Hebrew education, and I was astonished at what I saw. There was a big bookcase filled with volumes which were not all in Hebrew, as I could see by the inscriptions on the backs. Who read these books in the widow's house? Involuntarily I compared what my eyes beheld and what my ears had heard of the young man's utterances, and the mystery deepened.

"But I have since learned much about him, and although he has warned me that my love may lead me to great unhappiness, he has never blamed me.

"I have been here a little over a week, and when I am alone, as I am now, the gloomiest thoughts assail me, and I feel wretched, oh, so very wretched!

"To-night I am more downcast than ever. It seems to me that I am doomed to pass away without joy. I feel that there will be no re-

sponse to this, my cry in distress, and that I shall be left in the dreary silence that saps away my life. But I hope against hope that God will inspire you to redeem from torture the soul of

"Your loving

"RACHELKA."

When the doctor had finished reading, he held the letters for some time in his hands, and glanced again at the written pages.

"What do you think of them?" asked the Baroness.

"I am thinking of the man who could be so callous as to leave them unanswered," said he.

"He did not see these letters until a day or two ago; they were addressed to his club in Plotzk, and were not forwarded," the Baroness rejoined.

"How do you know?" he asked.

"By his own memorandum. The package of letters and his private notes slipped from his pocket, probably as he bent down to aid the girl. Here is the memorandum," she said, handing him a long slip of thin paper. As he read, his face became ghastly pale. When he had finished he said:

"Fate has been exceedingly kind to us. The girl saved you, and the young Jew, Joseph, saved me; such services cannot be esteemed too highly. I shall henceforth be a little more attentive to the young man."

"I wonder what he looks like," said the Baroness.

A groan from the adjoining room prevented an answer; the doctor sprang up, and went quickly to his patient. A moment later, a servant handed the Baroness a note.

"A soldier on horseback brought it, your ladyship, and rode off at once."

"Baroness" (she read on opening the note): "You must have picked up a package of papers that slipped from my pocket in the graveyard. I clearly remember that you were behind me when I carried away the girl. I also remember to have seen your name on the list of rebels. As this is the only list, you are safe. Let it be your reward for your kindness to the Jewess. She was to me more than a passing fancy. If she is unhappy, conditions are at fault, not I."

The note bore no signature. The Baroness struck a match and burned the paper.

"This note, if I sent it to Warsaw, would mean a trip to Siberia, or worse, for its writer; but a service for a service. We are quits," she said.

CHAPTER VII.

JOSEPH.

Joseph Rosen was a disappointed man. Not that he manifested anything of the sort in speech or manner, for there was no meeker soul than his in the world. But fate had tricked him. The fickle jade had shown him, through a chink in the Wall of Opportunity, glimpses of beautiful vistas and of cooling fountains at which the tired and weary travelers in the vast desert of this world might quench their thirst; then this glimpse was suddenly obscured, and his life was wrapped in a deep gloom through which his undaunted soul groped; and though now and again, from that inner self that is said to be part of God, there came a spark that brightened the path of some other saddened soul, it seemed to give no warmth to his own.

His life was not happily conditioned; that is, he was born to poverty and no change seemed ever possible. He was to be poor and unpitied, for the poor, despite the adage, seldom have sympathy with the poor. The statement that generous hearts go with empty pockets must be taken with a multitude of qualifications.

In the town where he lived there was poverty, but not of the pitiable kind. It was not the sordid, degrading poverty that disgusts. It was inborn, hereditary. Men were poor because they

were descended from generations of poor people. Those that defied fate and broke the rule were not respected even in their wealth. The "newly-rich" might show a brazen front to the old kind, they might buy power; they could not buy respect.

There was, one might say, an aristocracy of poverty in Dobrzyn. Those that peddled small goods amongst the peasants and those that bought farm produce for the rich merchants, were equally sure of their position in Poordom; they knew what they were; their standing was indisputable.

No one complained. Whatever they had to complain of was told in their prayers, with sighs and groans, to God. As for telling one another that there was no meat in the Sabbath pot, or no freshly baked bread for the Sabbath table, that was entirely out of the question.

They were virtuous, and the devil does not hate holy water more keenly than they hated an unvirtuous person. Their children, if bred in filth, were born in wedlock. Their women, if they sometimes made comparisons, never ran off with Russian soldiers. Heaven forbid!

This aristocracy lived in Back Street, the dirtiest street in the town. Behind Back Street were beautiful gardens; behind these were broad fields and long rows of thatched granaries, and between the fields ran the great road, lined with high poplar trees, to the city of Plotzk. There was sadness, poverty and filth in Back Street,

and beauty and the joy of nature behind it.

It was in this street and under these circumstances that Joseph lived. Here his father, also poor, was born, and here he died when Joseph was little more than an infant.

Of his relatives he knew only that his mother's brother, Daniel Horovitz, an ambitious and learned youth, had gone away and was never heard of again; and that his father's brother Max, a genius, had emigrated to America. The virtuous in Poordom joined to their vitriolic observations a few blasting curses upon the head of the apostate who had left the land of his birth to go to the land of the heathen, where observance of the Jewish ritual was impossible.

Joseph had indeed heard that his mother expected help from this very heretic uncle who, it was said, was quite wealthy, but the years went by and no help came; and Joseph thought of nothing save the uplifting of his own soul.

He manifested this ardent desire when quite young. He wanted to know. But his mother's poverty was so dire that she could not afford to send him to the Hebrew school, so she herself taught him to read the Hebrew prayers. This was not enough for the ambitious lad, who was then five years of age and envied the other children as he saw them going to school. He felt they were going to be great scholars while he would be ignorant.

He wept and kept up his unreasonable request to be sent to the Jewish school. Then the

mother's heart, tortured with exquisite pain that she could not grant her child's plea, fell upon a pious subterfuge. She told him to go to a corner and pray God earnestly every day to send her the means for his education.

Joseph took the matter very seriously, and prayed for hours every day. Frequently at night he would get up, and, going to the corner, would pray and weep. But, for a long time, there seemed to be no heed to this rare supplication.

One thing, however, resulted from this insistence on heavenly thoughts. Though the boy grew paler from day to day, upon his face and form there seemed to be poured out something that made one think of the angels in heaven. His speech, too, became changed; his words were those of one who had received a measure of divine wisdom and of the perfect knowledge of things.

One day he went to his mother, and, putting his hands on hers, said: "Mother, God has shown me the way to study His law. I will go to Reb (Rabbi) Moise Libe and ask him to teach me."

"Oh, my dear child," said she, almost terrified by his words. "Reb Mose Libe is a great scholar, and he would not think of teaching a little child."

"I will ask him. Have you not read to me that it is commanded to observe the law and to teach it, and must he not teach the law, when he

is asked, to those who do not know it? I will go and ask him," he said.

What reply could she make to so strange and so definite a purpose? She pressed him to her heart and told him to go, bidding God's blessing go with him.

Reb Moise Libe, who devoted his life to the study of Rabbinic literature, was seated at his table bent over a large folio volume of the Talmud, when the door opened and the little searcher after knowledge entered. Thinking that the boy had been sent with a ritualistic question such as he was often called upon to decide, the Rabbi smilingly asked,

"Well, my son, what is it?"

"Rabbi," said Joseph, and awe robbed his mind of the words he had prepared.

Seeing the child's hesitation, the Rabbi rose and asked him to come nearer and tell him what he wanted.

"Rabbi, I want to learn, I want to know the holy Law."

The Rabbi made a quick movement.

"What?" he cried, "you want to learn, to learn, and you come to me?"

"Yes, Rabbi, to learn and to know."

The Rabbi put his hand to his forehead, his lips moved as if in prayer; then he strode up to the boy.

"You—you want to learn? Who are you, my child?" he cried, his fine face reddening with evident emotion.

"I am the widow Rosen's son. My mother has taught me to read Hebrew, but I want to learn the Law and the Talmud, and I told her I would ask you," said Joseph.

"Perhaps your mother told you to go?" the Rabbi asked.

"She told me that you were a learned man and would not think of teaching a child; but I said that it was commanded to learn and to teach, and that you would teach me if I asked," said Joseph.

"Your faith is great and it shall not fail you, my son. Well has Rabbi Judah, the Prince, said, 'disturb not the teaching of the young, not even for the sake of rebuilding the holy Temple.' May God bless you, and cause your life to be a blessing to mankind. I will teach you every evening."

"I told my mother you would," the boy cried exultingly.

"Yes, with the help of God; but you must promise me that in the daytime, for some hours at least, you will run about in the free air. Jump and play and get strong, for those who take upon themselves the burden of the Law must be strong, both in body and in mind. Go home, my son, and come back here this evening," said the Rabbi.

To the little cottage in Back street there came that afternoon a joy so great and so ineffable that the poor widow, usually so sad, laughed and cried and prayed as she kissed, with a tenderness not unmixed with awe, the child that had

brought her this joy, for she had a prescience of his greatness although she could give it no expression.

For six years Joseph had the attention of the gentle Rabbi, and at the end of that time they were more like fellow students than master and pupil, so well had Joseph profited by the Rabbi's teaching.

The outside world had no inkling of this, for being most of the time out of doors and not attendng any school, the boy was not considered of any consequence. Then, too, he never went near the Talmud academy where the youths of his own age, advanced in study, were to be found. He was not even considered a good Jew, for he was constantly seen in the fields with the laborers, working with them, ploughing, harrowing or assisting in the harvest. Sometimes he was working at the grain elevators, carrying heavy sacks of wheat; sometimes disporting himself in the waters of the river, for he was an expert swimmer. By degrees he became unusually strong and developed a splendid physique.

Of a sudden a new idea possessed him. He wanted to study subjects other than Hebrew lore. He thought of going to the public school, but he was past the school age, and he knew no one who would teach him. At times he thought of confiding his desire to Doctor Lerko, Rachel's father. But the doctor's family was classed as the very highest in the town and he was afraid the doctor would drive him away with a sneer of

contempt. Educated Jews in Poland have a contempt for the uneducated, and if the uneducated happen to be poor, they regard them as animals that have no right to higher aims or higher purposes in life.

Fate came to his assistance. He was lying in the field one day when the aged priest, Father Cohanoski, a former university professor, spoke to him.

Joseph sprang up and gave a ready answer in Polish, which he had learned from the laborers, for the Jews amongst themselves speak a miserable German jargon.

"Ah, you speak Polish, that is good. Can you read and write?" asked the priest.

"No, but I should very much like to know how," Joseph replied.

"Why did you not go to the Polish school?" asked the priest, seating himself on a rude bench by the wayside.

At this Joseph, in quick, concise speech, told him his story, and the interest of the priest increased as he listened.

"What plan have you, what would you like to be?" asked the priest when the boy had finished.

"A physician," said Joseph without hesitation.

"You have set yourself a very high aim, considering that you have not reached even the lowest rung on the ladder; but we may try. If you are apt you might in a couple of years be ready to enter the high school, which would

mean many years of hard study there; and then, many years more at the university. Are you willing to undergo all these hardships of study for a career which affords but a scanty income at the beginning?"

"I am, Father, even if I have to live on bread and water all the years while I study," said Joseph.

"That will not be necessary. You shall receive a stipend sufficient to cover your personal wants. You would not care to become a Catholic priest?" the old man asked, looking straight at the boy. The latter shrank back terrified.

"No, no," he cried.

"Fear nothing," said the priest, putting his hand on the boy's shoulder, "you shall not be asked to do anything against your wish."

"When may I come?" asked Joseph, in whose eyes shone the gladness of his heart.

"If you wish, to-morrow," said the priest, and went away.

When Joseph entered his humble home that afternoon he actually sang.

"What blessings have come to my dear son?" asked his mother.

"Ah, mother dear, God gives blessings to His creatures far in excess of what they deserve. I am going to study with Father Cohanoski to-morrow, so as to learn something of things other than Hebrew," he said.

"Come here, my dear son, and tell your own mother—at what price will Father Cohanoski

teach you?" she asked, taking hold of his hand.

"Dearest, at the same price that Reb Moise Libe taught me, at the same price that all unselfish and great men do everything for the welfare of their fellow creatures," he replied.

"Did he not ask? Did he not make some suggestion?" she persisted.

"He did, but I told him that I did not want to become a renegade, and he told me that I should not be asked to do anything against my will," was Joseph's reply, which satisfied his mother fully. When on the day following he went to the priest's house, she tenderly kissed him and asked God's blessing on his work.

During the first week or two the priest was often disheartened; the elements of the new work appeared so strange and bewildering to Joseph that his mind refused to grasp them. No sooner, however, were the first difficulties overcome and the rudiments mastered, than the wonderful mind of the youth came into play. His studies with Reb Moise Libe had taught him how to learn. At the end of three years the priest declared him ripe for the university examinations, and told Joseph to get ready to go with him to Warsaw.

However, one Sunday, as the priest was putting on his vestments for high mass, he was stricken down by paralysis and died in the church.

An unspeakable sadness fell upon Joseph; from that day onward, he became strangely silent, and

with the exception of his master, Reb Moise Libe, he would communicate with no one. His health, too, would have suffered but for his passion for swimming and the work he did in the garden. But there was also another stimulus to his life in the fact that he was forced to make a living for himself and his blind mother. Formerly she had supported him by sewing, and during the time he studied with the priest the stipend he received was more than enough for both, but now he was entirely without means. He began to cast about, and at length was sent by one of the small traders to buy up some farm produce, but he was no adept in the petty trickery which is the mainspring of success in such business.

When Simon, the old under-sexton, died, Reb Moise Libe saw an opening for his young friend. He canvassed the elders of the synagogue, and as he commanded some influence, obtained the position for him. Joseph's life, however, had been lonely and monotonous until Rachel was thrust in his way, and he realised a new duty in protecting her.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VISION.

Six weeks had passed since Rachel, desperately wounded, had been taken to Castle Wysiniaski. Her recovery was more rapid than was at first expected when fever had set in. Baroness Levanovska had taken a great fancy to the girl and spent many hours at her bedside.

The broken sentences Rachel had uttered during her illness and much that she had afterwards told the Baroness about Joseph, aroused a keen desire on the Baroness' part to know this man, although in her mind she pictured an image of him that was entirely unlike the real Joseph.

She thought of him as one of superior character, but hardly of the class to be spoken to by one of her rank except in tones of command. What pleased a girl like Rachel, however well-born she might be, could not possibly be acceptable to the Baroness Levanovska.

"I must be growing stupid," she would say, breaking off from her reveries to laugh at herself. "Why, I believe I shall soon be letting my thoughts dwell on the young Jew."

As a matter of fact it was what she was doing.

"He may be some freak, some clever dreamer of his race. What is that to me? Nothing. I would not be guilty of going to the doctor's

office with any such idea. No, no,—certainly not to try to see a Jew," she said.

The order she gave to her lackey, however, was exactly contrary to what she had protested to herself; and that very day, knowing all the while that the doctor was attending several patients across the Vistula and would not return till the next day, she drove to his office, which was on the second floor of Martsup's house, and sat there for hours, looking out into the square, waiting, waiting for what?

Suddenly her eyes clouded, and in the strange mist that arose before her vision she saw the figure of a man like none she had ever seen. The figure stood motionless at the foot of the great wooden cross that was in the centre of the square. The bell of the church was tolling the "Agnus Dei," and at each stroke it seemed to her as if the figure rose higher and higher until it was on the cross, and with each measured, plaintive note, the face came into clearer view, until it appeared with a distinctness that startled her. With the last stroke of the bell the vision passed away, and nothing but the great wooden cross remained.

Though in the cold light of reason the Baroness called herself stupid when she thought of the strange vision, nevertheless she loved it, and went back to the doctor's day after day, ostensibly to fetch him to see Rachel, but often when she knew he was on his way to the Castle by another road.

She would then sit in the window and watch the Jewish street or the square for her vision to appear. To the doctor who once surprised her there she said,

"I shall make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Tshenstohova, for I have just seen the face of the Saviour himself."

The doctor, who followed the direction of her eyes, gave a loud laugh.

"Why, that is the young Jew, Joseph, who played a part in our heroine's drama," he said.

"Indeed," said the Baroness lightly, "then I am afraid you will have to give me powders for my nerves. I surely thought I saw the face of the Saviour."

"A ride on your horse Tyrant will do you more good than all the powders I can give you. How is our patient?" he asked.

"The Mother Superior took her out for a drive and I think she will not be home before late in the afternoon," she said as she rose to leave. "By the way, Kolbe is near Shierps; he needs money, but bids us to make no attempt to communicate with him at present. He will let me know and then you and Father Turetzki will call a meeting. And now au revoir."

On her way home she said to herself,

"Things are very stupidly arranged in this world. I certainly am beginning to think of him."

Try as she might, she could not rid her mind of the desire to become acquainted with this man,

although she knew little more of him than she had gleaned from the letters and from Rachel's meagre information about his life.

"Among us," Rachel had said, "we take little notice of people whose standing would not admit of even the possibility of an alliance."

"Not even if the man is as noble as your description of him?" asked the Baroness.

"But his position is ignoble, although I don't think there is a soul in all the world nobler than his," said Rachel.

"Do you not love him?" asked the Baroness.

"I? Oh, love does not exist for me any more. I must work to forget—"

"If—if you should change your mind and something were done to better the condition of this—this Joseph—would you—marry him?" the Baroness asked.

"I must think of nothing but my work to atone —to atone—" the girl said sobbingly.

"What have you to atone for, Rachelka?" the Baroness said, and there was a rare gladness in her voice. "You loved the man who married you—"

"He did not marry me," interrupted the girl.

"Yes, he did. He married you in the Catholic Church. It is true that neither you nor he professed the faith of the Church, but in all civilized countries it would be considered a legal marriage."

"So much the worse. I am married to a man who would not have me as his wife, but as his—"

"Hush," said the Baroness, putting her hand on Rachel's mouth. "It is better to love a bad man than be chained to one you cannot love. Hell has no tortures more horrible than that."

"How can one marry without love?" asked Rachel.

"One does; some people marry for position, others to get rid of their surroundings, others for spite," said the Baroness.

"And you—?" cried Rachel excitedly.

"Mainly for spite," the Baroness answered calmly.

"You frighten me," said Rachel.

"There is nothing to be frightened at. I was in love with a cousin; we quarreled and parted. Out of spite and in a spirit of bravado I married some one else. My husband was a man of great goodness of heart, but I did not love him. It was two years of torture, of a cold, passionless life that maddened me and would in the end have driven me to crime. But God's mercy saved me. My husband died, and now at the age of five and twenty I am free, heart-whole, and a mad politician," she cried with a laugh that had no ring of gladness in it.

Rachel drank in every word eagerly, and the excitement threw her into a fever that troubled the doctor greatly. He asked the Baroness to communicate with the girl's relatives, which she did at once, and as a result the Countess von Bruchstein came to Castle Wysiniaski.

However, Rachel rallied and mended rapidly.

After a fortnight her aunt returned to Warsaw to prepare a reception for the child of her sister. She adored Rachel, and wanted her to grace Warsaw society; but Rachel's mind was turned in a different direction. The Sisters of the Convent of the Immaculate Conception near Vielga had gained a great influence over her, and in her heart she wished to stay with the Sisters rather than go to Warsaw.

But the Baroness dissuaded her.

"You owe it to your aunt and to yourself to get as much happiness out of life as possible; you had enough of trouble. The convent is good only for the very saintly, the stupid, and those who have something to live down. Our kind must live in the world. One can do much good without being hooded and cloaked and dropping one's eyes at the sight of a man."

"But there is danger and temptation in the world," said Rachel.

"Well, what of it? It lends a zest to life. A woman of the world knows how to meet danger," said the Baroness.

"And temptation?" asked Rachel.

"It does not touch a woman of sense; but when the right temptation comes—"

"Well?" asked Rachel, eagerly.

"Then a woman is a fool to run away from it."

"Oh, but the sin."

"You simpleton, the right temptation is sanctified by God himself, for it is love, it is the bliss of wedded life; and the woman who does not

yield herself wholly and unconditionally to it is not a woman."

"Would you?"

"Yes, if I loved. If I loved I would yield my very life, and be his wife in life and in death. If I hated, I would kill."

"Do you love any one?" Rachel asked timidly.

"I?" said the Baroness, her cheeks crimsoning. "I—I do not think I do."

"I pray God to send you the best He can give; you are so beautiful and good."

"No, no, Rachelka, I am not good; I never was good. I used to wish my husband would die even while he had his arms round me. I have often wished to slaughter the Russians as they slaughtered my people. There is nothing soft or tender in my nature, for God never made anything right for me."

"Oh, it is sinful to speak thus. You *are* good. You saved my life and you are so good to everybody and—"

Rachel stopped, frightened; the Baroness had thrown herself on the couch and sobs shook her body. A few moments later she sprang up and smiling through her tears, said,

"Do not mind it, Rachelka, my nerves are not very strong to-day. Perhaps it is because you are going to leave me. I shall be so lonely without you."

"You can come to Warsaw, dear," said Rachel.

"No, no, Rachelka, I cannot go to Warsaw, at least not just now. I must stay here. My

happiness, perhaps my life, depends upon—staying away from Warsaw."

"There is great restlessness in Warsaw," said Rachel, thinking that she guessed the reason why the Baroness would not go to the capital; "but that, of course, makes no difference to me; my work is waiting and I must go on with it to find peace."

"And I to find my fate," said the Baroness, and went quickly from the room.

CHAPTER IX.

UNDER A SPELL.

Rachel's departure left the Baroness in a condition that she herself could scarcely understand. An unaccountable nervousness led her at times into the wildest and most intemperate actions. In the course of a dinner given by her shortly after Rachel had left, she became so enraged at a servant for some trifling inattention that she ordered him instantly to be flogged, and a moment later, regretting it, rushed from the room, gave the servant a handful of coins and almost entreated him to be better mannered in the future. Then she shut herself into her room for half an hour in a fit of tears, after which she reappeared, radiant and smiling.

The doctor, whom she visited almost daily, ordered her to go to Switzerland; but though she had planned out the journey, she put it off from day to day. She would not even go to Warsaw, although Rachel wrote her the most entreating letters.

"I have found," Rachel wrote, "more happiness than I deserve. My dear aunt indulges me in my pleasures, which consist in going to the hospitals and the homes of the poor and trying to alleviate as much suffering as I can. I never knew that there was so much suffering and sorrow in the world until I came to this city. I am,

of course, mindful of what I owe to my dear aunt, whose only living relative I am, for I know she takes a keen interest in social matters. I beg of you, dear Amanda, to come here and stay with me a while. I long to see you and to show you how deep and undying is my love for you."

But the Baroness always found an excuse. Her large estate demanded her presence. She never had known (she wrote in answer) how wrongly her affairs were managed until she looked into them herself.

As a matter of fact her affairs did not trouble her much. What she longed for was to find the reason for her unnatural condition of temper that had grown to be almost fierce. If it were only loneliness, that could be overcome. She could, if she so desired, have almost the whole male aristocracy in the district to amuse her; for the number of nobles who would have liked to retrieve their fortunes by an alliance with her was considerable. But she treated them with contempt.

"Our men," she once said to Countess de Lack of Vielga, "favor Polish women only when they have ruined their health and their fortunes in Paris."

"One ought to be patriotic and encourage them to stay at home," the Countess rejoined with a smile.

"If ever I offer myself as a sacrifice on the altar of my country, it will not be in this man-

ner," the Baroness replied. "By the way, when is Waldeck coming home?"

"Not for some time, I fear; he is hard at work at the university, and is the special favorite of Professor Baron von Horovitz," said the Countess.

"I wish he were here; he is the only man with whom one can talk rationally, and is not a bore," said the Baroness.

"He is a good boy," the Countess said, her eyes shining with maternal pride. "But really, Amanda, you ought to marry," she continued, "there are plenty of good men in Poland."

"I have had enough of one good man, and I am not going to put my neck into the yoke of unhappiness a second time."

As a matter of fact, however, she was deliberately going the way to put her neck in the yoke of unhappiness. Her daily rides to Dobrzyn were undertaken with a purpose, a purpose she dreaded to analyze and felt she could not achieve.

The Jew, Joseph, had crystallised into something more than a mere vision, and each time she saw his face and his tall, strong figure, a great trembling seized her. Once she heard him speak. She was in the doctor's drawing-room in animated conversation with his wife when a visitor was announced. The doctor looked through the glass door into his office.

"Ah, the young Jew, Joseph," he said, and went to see him, leaving the door partly open.

"Well, my friend, what do you want?"

"My mother is ill and I thought it best to ask you kindly to see her."

The Baroness heard the resonant tone of his voice and it thrilled her to the very heart.

Then the physician, perhaps with intention, asked for more particulars, which Joseph gave quite concisely, but at the doctor's effort to draw him into a broader field of conversation the young man became reserved and monosyllabic. The other did not press him any further; he promised to call within the half hour and Joseph went away.

"Did you hear the speech of the young Jew?" asked the doctor.

"Yes, he speaks rather well," the Baroness replied.

"Well, I shall have to see his mother; stay and have tea with us," he said, making ready to go.

"No, no, I must go; I have much to do; my correspondence has been shamefully neglected of late. By the way, doctor, do these people pay you?" she asked, fastening her glove.

"One cannot expect much from that class of patients," he said with a laugh.

"One ought to do something for these people," she said.

"Well, Baroness, you are not stingy with the Jews; you always let them drive good bargains in wheat and produce," he remarked.

"That is not charity, but business. What I mean is this poor woman, the young man's

mother; if she needs anything in the way of nourishment, let me know."

On the following day she learned that Mrs. Rosen's illness was not at all of a serious nature, but that she ought to have better attention.

When the Baroness left the doctor's house she gave her maid a hundred rouble bill.

"Take this to the widow Rosen," she said, "do not say who sent it. Just talk to the old lady and then give her the money. Do not say who you are. She lives somewhere on Back street; they will tell you."

The Rosens were puzzled at the girl's visit, but when she said she came from the doctor they felt more at ease.

"The doctor wants your mother to eat young chickens and drink Burgundy wine," she said to Joseph. Her eyes danced as she looked at the young man.

"Ah, young chickens and Burgundy wine cost much money," said Mrs. Rosen. "God makes us sick and He can make us well again."

"No doubt," said the girl, "but when you can get a little money to buy chickens and wine as the doctor has ordered, God will not be angry."

"Perhaps not, but I have not the money and so I must do without," Mrs. Rosen rejoined.

"As I love God, I'll give you the money—just lend it to you," said the girl, and put the bank note on the table.

The sight of the money frightened Joseph.

"No, no, we must not take this money; take it back," he cried.

"Don't fear," she cried, "it is honest money and you may take it. You can buy chickens and wine for your mother. You can get a new satin shubah for yourself; take it, handsome Jew, take it," she coaxed him. "And supposing I wanted to give you this money. It is my money and I can do with it what I please. And supposing the doctor told me to give you the money? But he did not. I like you and I give you the money; do, please, take it," she pleaded.

But Joseph would not be persuaded, and the girl, deeply offended, called him a fool and left.

That night the Baroness wept bitterly; she could not have said why. When she fell asleep she dreamed, and in her dream she saw more clearly. She saw herself at the feet of Christ, into whose bleeding hands she laid the burden of her sorrow. He told her to be patient and learn a lesson from her trial. Yet when she awoke the influence seemed to have passed away with the dream; she became restless, and asked herself what had come over her. During that day and many succeeding days she asked the same question again and again, always the same question. Sometimes she asked it with a sigh, at other times half in anger, and often in a fit of passionate weeping.

"Is it possible, dear Lord in heaven, is it possible that I am so forsaken?" she once cried out.

She was standing in front of a large mirror,

and as she looked at the reflection of herself it seemed to her that she was not the proud and beautiful Baroness Levanovska, but a lowly woman, a creature of ordinary clay who had no right to the possession of this and a half dozen other castles, no right to the rich furniture and thousands of costly articles that lay about in the great rooms of this palace, to the exquisite plate that was worth a king's ransom, to the retinue of servants that obeyed her will. She was alone in the world, an atom of humanity, struggling, suffering, and weeping without sympathy, without help, without hope. Of what good was all this wealth to her if it could not purchase surcease from pain, if it could not gain her the object she desired?

But what was the object? What was it she longed for?

She was afraid to give her thoughts shape, to put them into words.

At length, turning from the mirror, she lay down and tried in vain to rest.

But the thoughts in her tortured brain would not stop, the pain in her heart would not cease.

She sprang up.

"I am under a spell, a dreadful spell; I must shake it off," she cried, and rang the bell.

"The carriage," she said to the maid.

Passing through the great double-pillared veranda, down the broad marble stairs that led to the graveled walk of the court, she came to where the carriage stood in waiting, but she took

no notice of it. Her eyes wandered from the flower beds in the court to the roofs of the town, above which the spire of the old church gleamed in the sunlight.

The lackey held the carriage door open and looked at his mistress, but she saw nothing of her surroundings. She stood motionless, gazing into the distance.

Suddenly a clatter of hoofs was heard and the inspector of the estate rode into the court. At the sight of him a thought seemed to have come to her, and her eyes kindled.

"Anton," she called.

The inspector sprang from his horse and, cap in hand, approached the Baroness.

"Has the Rabbi of Dobrzyn sent for the wheat?" she asked.

"Not yet, your ladyship, although we threshed it last week and have it ready for delivery."

"Why was it not sent?"

"He would not accept it," said the inspector, his face flushing, "because it was not watched by one of themselves while it was threshed and sacked; he is afraid, I suppose, that we put pork in the wheat."

"Well, if we have agreed to let him watch it, he has the right to do so. Have some more wheat cut and let the Rabbi know. Matchek will go to town and fetch the man the Rabbi may send."

"We must send a hundred sacks of wheat to Mr. David Gold this forenoon, your ladyship,

and Matchek might go with the teamsters," said the inspector.

"No, let him take the wagonette. Matchek, exercise the horses for a half hour; I shall not drive out now," she said, and walked back into the house.

She took off her hat and gloves and sat for a long time quietly thinking; then she sprang up.

"If I go to Paris, I shall be rid of all these gloomy thoughts. Yes, I'll go to Paris or to Warsaw. This is ridiculous. I am bewitched. Because I have not seen him for three days I am making myself ill. To think that he would not accept money from Anna. It was foolish, foolish and wicked of me to send a servant. She could make no excuse, one at least that a man like him would accept. I wonder if he would have taken it from me," she mused, and a happy smile played on her lips.

"Whom will the Rabbi send?" she murmured. "Him perhaps. Then I shall see him more closely; I shall speak to him. Perhaps at close quarters the glamour will disappear, and I shall be free. But how can I speak to him and not betray myself? Oh, where is my strength, where is my courage? Is it possible that I love a Jew? I, I? No, it is impossible. What demon brought Rachel to my notice? Why did she speak to me of him? No, I will not have it; no, no. If you looked a thousand times like Christ I do not want you. I hate the Jews. I hate everybody—I hate myself."

She threw herself down upon a couch. In her soul was unspeakable rage, though in her heart a different fire was burning.

Her mind told her that society would consider her a pariah if it knew that she even thought of so unheard of a mesalliance. Her heart defied all reasoning.

Her mind warned her of a great personal and financial peril if she persisted in this desire, that the Count of Vielga in his unbending family pride might put her under guardianship or into a lunatic asylum. Her heart already schemed to defeat their attacks and to defend her love.

This mood was followed by a fit of self-reproach. "I am Baroness Levanovska, and my position demands something of me. I will not yield to my passion like a dairy maid. I am mistress of my own emotions. I will not see him; I will never see him again."

She rang the bell fiercely, and to the maid who rushed in she seemed like one suddenly gone mad. Trembingly the girl asked what the Baroness wanted.

"My horse," she cried, "and bring me my riding habit."

In less than ten minutes she stood outside, holding in one hand the train of her riding gown and in the other a stout English riding whip. She appeared the incarnation of a beautiful fury, and the groom trembled as he looked at her.

She swung herself upon the horse, a great, fleet-footed thoroughbred, who reared at her grip and dashed away.

CHAPTER X.

'TWIXT THE PRIEST AND THE DOCTOR.

The disappearance of Rachel caused Joseph much anxiety. But he dared not speak of it to his mother, whom the girl's sad fate had caused a great deal of unhappiness. These people were primitive; their hearts felt keenly for their neighbour's sorrow. Civilization had not taught them the hard lesson of selfishness, and in the little Polish town the widow Rosen and her son were warmest of all in their love for the unhappy girl.

Mrs. Rosen had asked several times for Rachel, but Joseph had not the heart to tell her what he knew.

"She has gone away," was all he said.

Of a sudden there came to him the absolute certainty that Rachel was alive and well. He could not have told how this knowledge was conveyed to him, but it was vivid and positive.

One day he met the doctor, whom he saluted as befitted a man of so high a position in the community, by taking off his cap. Everybody in Dobrzyn took off their caps to the doctor. They did it, the priest had once said, because they were afraid of their lives. But as the people were equally deferential to the priest, the doctor revenged himself by saying that the people were

afraid of their death at the sight of the priest, as he invariably took their money for the Church. These two men had long agreed to disagree excepting on one point, and that was Joseph. Like Kaminski and Janushek, they too found it hard to believe the evidence of their senses. Joseph was not a Jew; that was their assertion, and nothing he said could alter their conviction.

"Did you ever see a Jew who was not bitter against Christ and the Church? and this Joseph does and says things of which Christ and the holy Church would fully approve," said the priest.

"It is certainly so, Father, judging by what I have heard and have observed myself. But I should like to know his sentiments with regard to our cause," the doctor rejoined.

"He will be here to-morrow afternoon, and if you are here we might ask him."

"You may ask, but ten to one he will not answer."

"He will," said the priest.

"We shall see; if it were not against my latest principle I would bet you a basket of good Burgundy," the doctor rejoined.

"As I should have to send the Burgundy to your house first in case you lost the bet, I think we had better not bet; but you try and be here at two o'clock to-morrow," said the priest.

"Very well, Father," replied the doctor, and went away.

In the square he met Joseph and when the

latter, as we have said, saluted him, the doctor stopped him.

"How are you, my friend, and how is your mother?"

"Quite well, thank you."

"Have you had any news of Rachelka?" asked the doctor.

Joseph looked up quickly.

"She is well, I know, although I have not heard from nor of her since I called you to aid her," said Joseph.

"Then how do you know?" asked the doctor; but as Joseph made no reply, the doctor said, "Yes, she is well and far from here."

At this Joseph smiled.

The doctor saw the smile and it affected him wonderfully.

"If Christ had smiled that way the Jews, your brethren, would never have crucified him," he said.

"He did not smile because he knew that your brethren, sir doctor, would forever tell this falsehood," Joseph replied.

The doctor clapped his hands and laughed loud.

"As I love God you have wit as well as holiness. Will you repeat it to the Father? I will go to him now if you will tell him that," cried the doctor.

"I am going to see him now, but I shall not repeat to him what I said to you," said Joseph.

"And why, pray?"

"Because he is a priest and he believes what theology teaches on this subject."

"And you do not?" asked the doctor.

"No, *you* do not," Joseph replied.

"A revelation, as I live, a revelation."

"Which I beg you, sir doctor, not to communicate to the Father."

"I consent, on one condition."

"Well?"

"That you take part in our discussion, for the Father and I will talk politics."

"If I am able to follow I will gladly do so."

"Ha, ha, ha, you were evidently anxious about the Burgundy," cried the priest as soon as he saw his visitors.

"Something worse might happen to your Burgundy, Father, than to be drunk by good Poles, and something might have happened to it if the Pultava regiment had taken quarters in town," said the doctor.

"Well, my young friend, are you still engrossed in the history of the French Revolution?" asked the priest, shaking hands with Joseph.

"No, Father, I am reading the history of our own unfortunate country," said Joseph.

"That is right, my son; it is a glorious history, a history of the most liberal people and the fairest land in all Europe. But its fall, ah, its fall, its oppression, is without parallel."

"You forget Judaea, Father," said Joseph.

"Judaea was doomed to destruction; the people had sinned against God; they crucified His Son."

The doctor looked at Joseph, but the latter was silent.

"Then, too, the Jews had no leaders," the priest continued.

"Do not say that, Father," said Joseph. "The Jews had mighty leaders, but the nation died of the same disease as Poland."

"What do you mean?" cried the priest.

"Lack of discipline, want of cohesion; Rome had both and so has Russia."

The doctor and the priest were startled; the idea seemed a new one to them.

"Thus you conclude—" said the doctor.

"That a united people is invincible," Joseph replied.

"Then you think there is no hope for our country?" cried the priest.

"I do not say that; hope is the gracious gift of God. A brave people like ours may hope, but they must be united. I have read that the American people, once few in number, defied and defeated the English nation. The American people were united."

"Blood of Christ," cried the doctor, "these are brave words, and doubly brave coming from the mouth of a Jew. Tell me, would you fight for the liberty of Poland?"

"I will fight against the oppressor, if I be deemed worthy to give my life for the sacred cause," he replied.

Moved by the same impulse, the priest and the doctor threw their arms around Joseph.

"Brother," they cried.

Joseph was deeply moved at this manifestation of kindness, and when the others had seated themselves he remained standing, his flushed face betraying the agitation in his heart.

To the eye of the doctor he seemed like a supernatural being, and all at once the latter realised that Baroness Levanovska might well have conceived a passion for this young god.

When Joseph bade them au revoir the doctor said,

"We may want your services any day; the Baroness Levanovska may send you on a mission."

"I shall be ready," said Joseph and went away.

On the square he was met by a little boy who told him that the Rabbi desired to see him at once, and he went to the Rabbi's house.

"Joseph," said the Rabbi, "the inspector of the Baroness Levanovska's estate has sent word that the wheat I ordered for the Passover is ready to be threshed. Go there and see that it is properly handled and be careful that no moisture gets to it. The Baroness has sent a wagonette, so you can go at once."

Joseph promised to be careful. He went home to bid his mother good-bye, then returned to the Rabbi's house, where the wagonette was waiting. He climbed up beside the coachman, and they set off through Back street on to the road to Wysiniaski.

CHAPTER XI.

THE REALITY.

Matchek, the coachman, cast furtive glances at Joseph, who seemed in deep thought. They had passed a large wooden crucifix before which Matchek uncovered his head. As he looked up to the wooden representation of the crucified Christ and then at his neighbor, he made the sign of the cross.

"As I love God," he cried, "it is wonderful."

Joseph turned quickly.

"What is wonderful?" he asked.

"Your face," Matchek replied.

Joseph smiled but made no reply. He was used to these remarks. They had caused him pain and pleasure in years gone by. He was not really interested in them. It had often seemed to him that he was very unfortunate to resemble a person so utterly hated by one class and so fully adored by another. He had derived no benefit from the resemblance, as he was not highly respected by the Jews nor greatly honored by the Christians; he was after all "the Jew Joseph".

While these thoughts ran through his mind, Matchek, too, was thinking, and at length gave it expression by asking,

"Are you a Jew?"

"I am a Jew," was the reply.

"Ah, but you don't look like one; you look like our Lord Christ; how can you be a Jew?" the driver clinched the argument.

Joseph gazed into the distance, a sad smile hovering on his lips.

Suddenly his features became animated, a flush spread over his face.

"Yonder is a runaway horse," he cried, pointing straight ahead, "and it is coming this way. Turn to the side and stop the horses."

"As I love God, so it is. Mary, Mother of God! it is our Tyrant. Oh, help, Holy Virgin! the Baroness! Look, the bridle is hanging down and she is clinging to the saddle. Help! good saints in heaven, help!"

"Stop the horses," said Joseph curtly.

But Matchek was so excited that he was unable to do this.

Seeing the necessity of immediate action, Joseph grasped the reins and with a tug brought the horses to a halt. He sprang from the wagonette, and tying the reins to the front wheel, told Matchek to alight. In a moment Joseph's long mantle was off; he grabbed the wide wagonette cover and told Matchek to hold on to one side.

"Mother of God, what good will this do?" he moaned.

"We will throw it over the horse's head, it will stop him. I saw it done in Nureck's field," said Joseph.

They held the cover stretched like a screen,

and as the maddened animal came close, Joseph cried,

"Throw!"

The horse went down. He tried to rise, but Joseph held his head, at the same time calling to Matchek to take the Baroness from the saddle.

But the animal struggled and kicked, so that Matchek could not approach. The Baroness lay on the side of the horse; she was unconscious, but in no danger of being hurt by the horse's kicks.

"Come here and hold his head down," cried Joseph, "I'll see what I can do. Have you a knife? Well, put it on the ground and come here."

In a moment Joseph had cut the girth of the saddle, and carried the inanimate form of the Baroness to the wagonette.

"Fetch water from the creek," said he.

"How?" cried Matchek.

"In your cap; hurry."

Matchek let go of the horse, who struggled to its feet and galloped back to the castle.

"What will you do with the water?" asked Matchek.

Joseph was struck with the same thought.

"The best thing we can do is to take her home as fast as we can," said he. "Hold her ladyship while I put on my coat."

While he was putting on his long mantle, Joseph, who was accustomed to think quickly, realised immediately in what a predicament he

would be if he were to hold the Baroness as Matchek was holding her—like a child in the arms of its mother. For a moment he stood irresolute.

"Now, why don't you come here?" cried Matchek.

"Get up to your seat," said Joseph.

"You get in first and take her ladyship, quick; I must drive, mustn't I?" cried Matchek.

There was no time to lose and so Joseph was forced to get into the wagonette and take the Baroness from Matchek's arms. A few moments later Matchek was driving at a rapid pace toward the castle.

Not once while he held her in his arms did Joseph look at the woman whose head rested on his breast. His thoughts were far away, with his mother, with Rachel, with the doctor and the priest, and with God, whom he prayed to save the life of this high born Gentile who had met so sudden an end even in the morning of her life. He believed she was dead, yet he prayed for a miracle. His eyes were turned heavenward and his lips moved in voiceless prayer.

Suddenly the Baroness opened her eyes; she saw the face of Joseph and a tremor ran through her body. She sighed and closed her eyes; it was a dream, a delicious, sacred dream; she was dead and in heaven.

However, the living present was too strong for a dream; the strong arms that held her told only of life, of power, of love. She clearly re-

called what had happened; she had tried to ride down her excitement by racing over the long road, had taken fences and ditches recklessly, and had whipped the horse on and on until he got beyond her control. The reins fell from her nerveless hands, she had just a moment's presence of mind to fasten her skirt and girdle around the saddle horn, then she sank upon the horse's neck and all was dark. But now she saw; she saw clearly that she could not run away from her fate —she was in its very arms. Joseph had evidently saved her life. The thought overpowered her and great sobs shook her body.

He saw her tears, and together with the intense relief that he felt at the evidence of her recovery, came also distress at the idea that she might be hurt and in pain.

"Gracious lady——"

He could say no more.

"You have saved my life," she said.

"Is your ladyship in pain?"

"Was I thrown when you found me?" she asked.

"No, we brought the horse down. Your ladyship is not hurt, I hope?"

"No, I am only tired," she replied, and closed her eyes. God is good she thought, and abandoned herself to the delicious feeling that permeated her whole being.

When the wagonette drew up in front of the broad steps and the frightened servants crowded

about their adored mistress, the latter said to Joseph,

"Carry me into the room."

Without a word he rose and carried her into the house.

Having placed her on a couch, he quickly withdrew. In the hall he was met by the inspector, whom Matchek had informed of all that had taken place.

"I thank you in the name of our people for the service you rendered our gracious mistress," said the inspector.

"Sir Inspector," said Joseph, "I have done my duty, and God gave me the strength to do it. I am glad to have been of service to her ladyship. And now, if you will permit me, I'll look after the wheat."

As they went toward the granaries the inspector said, "Ah, if all Jews were like you."

"Sir Inspector," said Joseph, "in the sight of God there are neither Jews nor Gentiles, but human beings He has made, just as this, our mother country, knows neither Jews nor Gentiles, but Poles who must try to love one another for her sake."

The inspector stood still and looked at the young Jew who had said this, then he grasped his hand and with a voice that ill concealed his deep emotion, he said,

"Brother, you are a Pole."

CHAPTER XII.

A THOUSAND ROUBLES.

The Baroness, although not hurt, was very weak from the shock, and the doctor who soon afterward arrived at the castle ordered absolute quiet. No one was admitted to see her.

Joseph stayed long enough to see the wheat sacked and locked in a large bin which he sealed, then he went away unobserved and walked back to Dobrzyn.

He had hardly got into his house when the door opened and a thick-set, ruddy-faced stranger appeared.

"Does Reb Solomon Rosen live here?" he asked.

"Alas, his widow lives here," said Mrs. Rosen. "Who is it?"

"Reb Solomon dead!" he exclaimed. "Blessed be the Righteous Judge. It seemed as if it were but yesterday I bade him good-bye."

"Who are you?" the widow asked.

"I am Yoel Sager from Plotzk. I arrived a few days ago from America and I have a message to deliver to you, some good news."

"Ah, Yoel Sager; yes, I remember. Why, that must be nearly twenty-three years ago, for it was soon after the birth of my blessed son Joseph. Have you prospered?" she asked.

"Thanks be to the Lord who has made me

prosper in that strange and wonderful land," he replied.

"And are you going to stay in Poland?" she asked.

"God forbid," he said. "I came to visit the graves of my father and mother and then I am going back to my family in New York."

"Did you—did you meet my brother-in-law, Max?" cried the widow excitedly.

"Of course I did. He is, or was, for he died a year ago, one of the richest men in New York, a millionaire, I tell you. Now, of course, his son has it all; but Howard Rosen is one of the finest men in New York, and he will soon be here," he said.

The widow seemed not to have heard the last remarks. Her body swayed to and fro.

"Poor Max dead, dead," she said. "All, all, every one gone, my poor husband, now Max too; and my brother—alas, God only knows where he is. My dear son, we are alone in the world now. I had hoped that some day you would receive something to further your fortune, I had hoped that Max would remember us; but suffering is our inheritance; let us not murmur, lest we sin against the Lord."

Her voice had gradually fallen, and the last words were spoken almost in a whisper.

Joseph, who had stood by his mother's side, put his arm around her.

"Mother," he said, "have no regrets; we cannot go against the will of God."

The woman threw her arms around his neck.

"My dear child," she sobbed, "It was for your sake, only for your sake. Your uncle Max is dead, and the second generation forgets, forgets."

"Dear mother, do not worry on my account; it has pleased God to keep me in lowly station, but we have not gone hungry. God, who cares for all, has provided for us, and we live. Perhaps it is my destiny to serve others; then, dear mother, let me keep on in the service; let me do what is right though I had to sacrifice my life."

Sager sat like one dazed; open-mouthed, he listened to the words of the young man in whose meekness lay a power that seemed divine. At length he found sufficient mastery over himself to speak, but his voice was husky with emotion.

"I always thought that Howard Rosen was a prince among men by his education, by his manner, by his charities, but here is his superior. Young man," he cried, " you are worthy of the best this world can give, and I feel honored in knowing you. Your cousin Howard is coming to this country on some business of great importance. I do not know how soon he will be here, but he will be here this summer. Before I left New York he gave me five hundred dollars to give you. I changed it into Russian money and here it is," he said, "a thousand roubles."

"A thousand roubles!" cried Mrs. Rosen.

"Dear mother," said Joseph, "a thousand roubles is a great deal of money and for your sake I am glad to have it, but as for myself, it comes too late. Good friend," he said to Mr. Sager, "I do not undervalue the kindness of my cousin, but of what good is money to me now except to assist those less fortunate? If this money had come years ago I might have lived up to my birthright, I might have become qualified to work successfully for humanity. But to-day all this is scarcely possible. I am stamped a beggar."

Mr. Sager was moved by the force of passion which this statement suggested. In it spoke the accumulated suffering of a lifetime. He rose and, taking the young man's hand, said,

"There are many sins committed in this world, but the sin of neglecting those who with proper aid might become as beacon lights to their fellow men, is surely the greatest of all sins. I have this evening learned a lesson I shall not forget. God bless you, my young friend, and may He wipe out your suffering. Better days are in store for you. And now I must go back to Plotzk. Farewell!"

He shook hands with Joseph and Mrs. Rosen and left.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MISSION OF JOSEPH.

"Mother," said Joseph, " the doctor wants to see me and——"

"What is it, my son?" she asked, seeing that he hesitated.

"I may have to go away for a day."

"You know best, dear; if it is necessary, go," she said.

"I don't like to leave you alone, mother."

"Don't be alarmed on my account, my son; but you might ask Mrs. Kaminski to send over her little girl."

"Very well," said Joseph, "I'll send her over, as I may have to start immediately on the doctor's errand."

"Go, and God be with you, my son."

Joseph kissed his mother and went to the doctor's office. He was asked to go into the private room, but when he entered and saw who was there, he hesitated.

"Enter, brother," cried the priest and the doctor.

He was introduced to the several nobles present.

"Well," cried Bogadski, a wealthy landowner from across the Vistula, "A man is a man and a Pole is a Pole, as long as his heart is in the

right place. But I would ask you, my friend, of what use is it to have one Jew amongst us when all the others are afraid of their own shadows and hold with the Russians?"

"Pan Bogadski," said the priest, "you are badly informed on the subject; but this is not the object of our meeting. It is first, to find our Pan Kolbe, secondly to send him the twenty thousand roubles for which he asked the committee several months ago, and thirdly, to find out how many men he needs. Prussia is now at war with Austria and our operations can be carried on with greater hope of success in this part of the country, it appears to me."

"You will find it very difficult, Father, to reach Pan Kolbe, and even more difficult to send him money, as the roads are covered with the Cossacks who are on his track," said Bogadski.

"That difficulty will be overcome easier than you think, Brother Bogdan," the priest replied. "Our young frend here will do both."

All looked at Joseph.

"You!" cried Bogadski who sat next to Joseph.

"It will be an honor to serve my countrymen," he calmly replied.

A clapping of hands greeted the remark.

"As I love God, this is the speech of a Pole," cried Bogadski. "But you may find your death in the attempt."

"To die in the service of humanity is an end any good man might seek; to die in the service

of one's oppressed country is a glory for which every patriot longs and in which he finds his richest reward. I am ready to go wherever you may send me."

"Bravo! bravo! Long live Poland!" they cried, and springing up they surrounded him, each eager to shake his hand.

Amid all the talk and excitement Joseph remained calm. Suddenly his face flushed, for in the door leading from the front room stood the Baroness Levanovska.

As soon as the nobles saw her, they greeted her enthusiastically and each kissed her hand; but her eyes saw only Joseph who, with bent head, waited to be spoken to.

She approached him.

Bogadski hastened forward.

"Gracious Baroness," he cried, "let me introduce to you the best Jew my eyes have ever beheld."

"Pan Rosen," said the Baroness, and stretched forth her hand.

A thrill went through Joseph; it was the first time in his life that any one had ever called him Pan Rosen.

He took the proffered hand but did not kiss it.

"Kiss the hand of the gracious Baroness," cried Bogadski, "you are a gentleman, and as good a Pole as ever breathed. Kiss her hand."

Joseph bent down and kissed the hand. His confusion was great.

"I ought to kiss your hand," whispered the Baroness, "you saved my life."

"I thank you," he murmured. He was so overcome that he sought the chair by his side to steady himself.

But the Baroness added to his confusion by saying,

"Gentlemen, this Pole has saved my life by the greatest bravery, and I beg to commend him to your kindest regard."

A great shout of "bravo" greeted the remark. When all were seated the priest said,

"The only thing that is needed to make Yushu absolutely one of ourselves is his baptism in the Holy Mother Church."

"Well, Brother," said Bogadski, "what do you say to this?"

"I say that I should be unworthy your confidence if I consented."

"How?" cried Bogden Bogadski, who being a choleric man, his face darkened at this remark.

"My experience in life is very limited," said Joseph, "but I know that honour and love are won by faithfulness in the cause for which a man lives and works. Could you trust one to whose name was attached the stigma of traitor?"

"But the Jews are wrong and we are right," said the priest.

"The Jews say that you are wrong and they are right, and my faith is the Jewish; but I am not called upon to decide who is wrong and who is right. All I know is that I hold a faith,

and whosoever breaks a faith is a traitor. If I am wrong in this I shall answer to my God, for He alone knows the truth. But I have another faith, and that is the faith of my oppressed and downtrodden country. For this faith I am accountable to you, my countrymen. I shall not break the religious faith, so that I may, if need be, die honorably for the faith of a Pole."

The nobles applauded Joseph's words while the Baroness looked at him through her tears; she felt so humble in his presence, so grateful that God had permitted her to know this man, that she could have thrown herself at his feet and begged him to permit her to serve him as a creature too lowly to love him.

Bogadski too, was fascinated by the young Jew, and during the subsequent discussion as to the best means of keeping up the revolutionary activity, his manner to Joseph was most deferential.

At length it was decided that Joseph should go to Wysiniaski and thence proceed to Shireps where Kolbe with his small force was in hiding.

To the Baroness, who offered him her carriage, Joseph said,

"It is best that I should walk; it will excite no suspicion."

Two hours later Joseph was driven to Shireps, and through the good offices of the druggist, a trusted friend of Kolbe, he came face to face with the great leader. But it was a sad message he brought back. The leader himself

was disheartened; his people were scattered, and he was making arrangements to go to France. He desired to return the money to the Baroness, but Joseph told him that his orders were to give him the money as a gift from her. Kolbe's low spirits affected Joseph as a personal calamity, and on the way home he was silent, though Matchek tried hard to draw him into conversation.

"Lost, lost, all is lost," he murmured.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TEMPTATION.

At one of the windows of the Castle the Baroness stood, eagerly scanning the road to Shireps. The morning was far advanced, the clock had struck eight, but still there was no sign of Joseph. She opened the window, adjusted a field-glass, and tried to throw her sight as far into the distance as her heart had gone. At last she heaved a great sigh—more of a sob than a sigh—and putting her hand to her bosom said,

"Thank God, they are coming."

She took a book and sat down. A few minutes later Joseph stood before her.

"Why so sad, my friend?" she asked.

"Ah, your ladyship, I am the bearer of bad news," he said.

"And it is?" she asked.

"Kolbe told me to tell your ladyship and all the friends here that the star of Poland has set; that we are in the clutch of the bear and that we must wait a better opportunity or get the aid of Napoleon."

The Baroness appeared little affected by the news.

"Ah, well, Pan Kolbe knows best; no better man could possibly go to Napoleon. But, pray be seated," she said, and pointed to a chair by her side.

"And meanwhile?" he asked.

"We must submit, and try to live for other things. There is much pleasure to be got out of life besides politics," she rejoined. "I suppose you find pleasure in many things."

"Pleasure—I never think of that. How could I? I only do my duty. I do not know anything else," he said falteringly.

"But I am told that you are well read, and that you are a linguist; then literature must be one of your pleasures. If so, you are enjoying pleasures beyond the reach of many of the wealthiest in the land."

This clever manœuvre disarmed him completely. All the time he had been in her presence he had had in mind the rabbinical dictum that 'it is sinful to talk to a woman, for women talk only idle talk.' Her turning the conversation to literature made him forget the rabbis and their dicta.

"I will confess to your ladyship that I like books very much. I have never been in a great library, but it must be wonderful," he said.

"There is something more wonderful than literature," she said slowly, and as he looked at her questioningly she continued, "that which is more wonderful than literature is art, the art of painting as seen in the galleries of great cities."

"Does your ladyship mean that the wonder is in the idea represented or in the technical execution?" he asked.

She saw the drift of his question.

"Both," she said. "But then what art could really portray an idea? What painter could show us the workings of the human heart?"

"Literature does it," said Joseph with flaming cheeks. "Mitchkievitch did it, and the infinitely sweeter Heine."

"Do you like Heine?" she asked.

"Very much."

"Then read me something; you will find his Book of Songs on the table."

Joseph took the book. As he opened it his eyes betrayed the pure gladness of his heart, and the Baroness, mentally paraphrasing Heine's words, thought, "I wish I were a book and thou wouldst thus hold me and thus regard me." She did not know that he loved Heine best because the poet knew, as did few others, how to portray the passion and the suffering of the heart, the quenched aspirations and the blighted hopes in love and life. Heine, too, was the antithesis to his own thoughts, which were ever high and holy, but made him sombre and sad. The mental excursions he had made into the unexplored regions depicted by the poet, his satire and his self-castigation, acted as a tonic upon Joseph's mind. The first poem that met his eye was one of those he had so often read that it seemed to him as if he himself was the author of it.

"Which poem shall I read?"

"Any you like."

"Well, then, this," he said, and read in the original:

" 'Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab.' "

The Baroness was struck by the deep emotion his reading betrayed, and her heart felt a pang as she thought that he too knew "the sweet wishes that bloom and wither and bloom and wither again, and so on till the grave."

The pathos with which he read touched her heart. There was a wonderful charm in his voice; its depths, as he subdued it to give more effective expression to the poet's thoughts, seemed to her like the rarest music.

She knew he could not have learned to read like this from the good Father Cohanoski. This was the gift of nature by which one master spirit presented the thoughts and words of another. Joseph seemed oblivious to his surroundings, and did not notice that she had moved close to him. Still more closely she moved up to him, until her palpitating bosom touched his arm and her sweet breath rose to his face, but he seemed to be unaware of it. He was in a different world.

"Read the sonnets," she said, and herself turned the pages.

He read Heine's beautiful Sonnets to his Mother, and while he read her hand stole softly upon his arm and she felt an unquenchable desire to tell him of her love. Bending over she breathed,

"Yushu, I love you."

He sprang to his feet. In a moment he was aware of what had happened and of what it meant to them both.

"I beg your ladyship to permit me to go," he murmured.

"I beg of you to stay and hear me, Joseph. It is not a wild and sudden passion. I love you; I have loved you for months. Do not think harshly of me because I speak to you thus. I am alone in the world. The different stations we occupy made it impossible for me to come near you and win your love by degrees. God meant you to save my life and that life is yours. Love me and I will make you happy. Your every wish shall be fulfilled. Joseph, dear, speak to me," she pleaded.

But he remained silent.

She rose and took his hand.

"Joseph, are you made of stone? Will you have less pity on me than on Rachel? See, I am hungry for your love; my life has been desolate until now. Can you be so cruel and pitiless as to thrust me back into the abyss of coldness, solitude, and suffering?"

Still he remained silent, although it was evident that her words distressed him.

At length the woman's passion overpowered her, and throwing her arms around his neck, she cried,

"Have pity on me, Joseph; do not destroy the

life you saved. Speak to me; only a word, I implore you."

"My dear friend," he said, gently disengaging himself, "I am but an humble man and unworthy the great grace you have shown me. I respect and admire you, for who would not? but I cannot say to you that I love you. I pity you from the depth of my soul, and I pray God to send you a man you may love and who may love you in honour. Realize that I am a Jew, that I am of very humble station; you are of high station, and to it you owe a duty you dare not shirk."

"I defy the world," she cried; "the world has given me no happiness. You are nobler than I am, nobler than all who pretend to be so, and I love you. Come to me, you and your dear mother; I will make you both happy. We will go away, to Paris, to Italy, anywhere you like. Only do not leave me, I beseech you," she pleaded.

"Ah, you do not understand and I cannot explain. All I can say is that God calls me elsewhere. I must work, work for something which, although definite in my soul, I yet can find no words to express. I wish neither gold nor high station; to do the will of God neither is needed. But you, who have an abundance of earthly riches, I beg you to look about you and see the sorrow and the suffering that is everywhere, and try to do the best you can. Some day you will be glad that you have followed the desire of God and not that of your heart."

But his words, spoken with infinite tenderness, excited her more keenly.

"I cannot live without you. Take my fortune, take all, give it to the poor; only do not leave me."

Hot tears fell from her eyes, and the soul in him suffered at her distress. She sank down and covered her face with her hands.

Joseph gazed at her, at first with a feeling of pity; he was still the Joseph of old, a meek, servile creature whose life, being pitiful, could accord compassion to all who were tortured by grief; he pitied the woman who sobbed broken-hearted.

Then gradually another look came into his eyes, a look that came like a streak of flame direct from the heart and burnt the scales that hitherto had covered his sight. The woman before him was beautiful; the lines of her form exquisite; she seemed like a phantom that floated in the air, trailing behind a fascination that lured earthborn man to eager pursuit. From her body emanated a fragrance that enveloped and dazed him, that stirred his blood and made his senses run riot. He stretched forth his hands—it was the act but of a moment; then his hands fell. Again he was Joseph, the self-abnegating Jew. "Mother," he whispered; and bending toward the Baroness he said:

"God have pity on you and—on me."

He turned and quickly left the room.

Hastening from the castle he ran all the way

to Dobrzyn. He arrived at his home in an almost exhausted condition.

"I have been very anxious about you, my son; I thought I saw you in danger, but thank God, you are here," said his mother.

"Danger is always near," said Joseph, "but a mother's prayer is the guardian on our way. God bless you, mother, and keep you well. In about a week we shall be in the great city of Warsaw, and with God's help, you will be well and happy."

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE TRAIN.

The days succeeding his conversation with the Baroness were days of great unrest for Joseph. A nameless fear caused him to keep away from his Christian acquaintances. In his distress he went to his former teacher, the aged Reb Moise Libe, to whom he confided the story of the events that so grievously burdened his mind.

"I am not afraid of evil consequences from your association with the revolutionists," said the Rabbi. "You are a man, and you must live up to your convictions. The cause of Poland is just, our people are well treated by the Poles. The Russians have treated us barbarously. and we do not know what greater evil is in store for us. But the other matter is more serious. A woman's passion is like a raging lion. The best you can do is to go away. Let no one know where you are. Do not write to me, for I may be asked. I want to say truly that I do not know. Do not wait until the eight days of the Passover are gone by. Leave to-morrow morning. Nureck's wagon goes to Vlotzlavek at four o'clock. Take your mother and go."

The old man gave him his blessing and Joseph left him. He went straight to Nureck's house and arranged to be taken to Vlotzlavek.

"Going to celebrate your engagement in Vlotzlavek?" asked the wagoner.

"Just going to see the city, and then away," said Joseph.

"Don't tell me that. When a young man travels in Passover week he goes to see his prospective wife. It was so in olden times among Jews and so it will be," said Nureck.

Joseph paid for his journey in advance, and bidding the wagoner good-day, went home.

His mother naturally acquiesced in whatever Joseph said. She was loth to leave the things in the house in view of the fact that their stay in Warsaw was to be indefinite. But Joseph told her that it was absolutely necessary for him to be unhindered by luggage, as they could buy all they needed in Warsaw.

"But how shall we carry the money?" asked Mrs. Rosen.

"Carry it on your person, mother," said Joseph.

"God forbid, it would make me too nervous; but I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll put the large bills in the prayer book, and as soon as you have bought the tickets and the necessary provisions for the journey in Vlotzlavek, we will put all the money in the prayer book and this we will put in the portmanteau."

Joseph, who had no experience in such matters, did as his mother told him, and when he had made his small purchases, he put the money in the prayer book, and this he replaced into the portmanteau, which he carefully locked. He gave his mother the key. In the train to War-

saw, as they travelled fourth class, they were forced to sit on the floor with the many peasants who went the same way. The crowd was constantly changing as many got off at the wayside stations, many others getting on to go to the great horse market in Lovitch.

Joseph and his mother sat in a corner. He had spread his long overcoat, on which his mother lay sleeping, and between them was the precious portmanteau. At one of the stations a Jewish peddler offered mead and fruit for sale. Joseph wanted an orange, and as his mother was awake he told her that he would like to buy one. She gave him the key to the portmanteau, out of which he took the money. Both enjoyed the fruit, and when they arrived at the station at Kalish, Joseph went out to "stretch himself." When he returned he found his mother in hysterics, uttering shriek after shriek. The portmanteau was gone.

The crowd of peasants, not knowing the cause of the woman's cries, swore at her for disturbing their peace. Some laughed at the woman's anguish, others tried to console her. None seemed to know what to think of the matter, and all grabbed their belongings and held them tightly about their persons.

During the trouble a guard came in, and pushing away the peasants, made his way to Mrs. Rosen.

"Throw her out, guard, she makes us crazy," one cried.

"Put her in the baggage wagon," cried a second.

"No, in the swine car; she is only a Jewess," a third called out.

"Silence, you trash," cried the guard. "What is the trouble, Jewess?"

"Someone has stolen my portmanteau," moaned the poor woman.

"Stolen your portmanteau! Did you see who did it?" he asked.

"My mother is blind," said Joseph.

"Blind, and some one stole her portmanteau. Ah, it is too late now; the train has started, but you are all under arrest," said the guard. "Don't open a window. The whole pack of you goes to Warsaw to be searched."

Joseph smiled perforce at this summary proceeding. The suggestion that the guard might look about or permit Joseph to do so for the missing portmanteau was rejected with scorn.

"And supposing we find it, will that help the matter? Is it not a fact that the outrage was commited in my car? I have said they go to Warsaw and to Warsaw they go," said the guard.

There was howling and lamentation amongst the peasants, for they were not only forced to miss their business appointments, but they knew to what trouble they would be put in the city of Warsaw under the Russian government. But there was no help; the guard was there and it looked as if the peasants would have to take

the enforced journey. However, at the next station, one peasant, more courageous than the rest, opened the window and appealed to the station master. At the latter's order the peasants were lined up and their portables submitted to Joseph for identification. It was in vain, the portmanteau was not found.

"What shall we do, my son, what shall we do?" Mrs. Rosen asked in despair.

"What can we do? God has sent us this misfortune to try our souls. Let us be strong, mother, and trust in God."

"But where shall we go, where shall we stay in the great city? Oh, why did I not follow your advice and keep the money about me? I am to blame, my son, I am to blame," she lamented.

"God forbid that I blame you. I know it was the will of God. At present there is no need to worry. We must trust in God, He will not let us die; He will provide. We shall go to a Jewish hotel, and then I will see. Sit down, mother, and rest. We have paid our passage money, and I have the bundle of provisions. Suppose I had put the provisions into the portmanteau? There is always a reason to be thankful to our Father in heaven," he said, and assisted his mother to sit down.

But she sighed deeply, and when they reached Warsaw and were told to leave the car, she could not keep back her tears, and when once on the platform, sobbed bitterly.

CHAPTER XVI.

FOUND.

"Vladislav," said a tall, white haired man, "give me the hand bag and run over to that woman and the young man yonder and see what is the trouble."

"The woman is blind, she was robbed on the train, and the young man is her son, my lord," Vladislav reported.

"Fate," murmured the gentleman. "Perhaps she is ill, and she has been robbed! Well, Vladislav, let us see what we can do for robbed humanity."

"My lord, you will miss the train."

"I may miss the train, Vladislav, but I shall miss something else if I do not assist robbed humanity. We have started out to mend our ways, Vladislav, and to be more merciful to our kind. Let us begin by doing it in this place and now. We may smooth the road to the woman's grave, for she is old, and we may brighten the life of her son, for by his quiet demeanor in misfortune he is evidently wise and of a fine temperament."

While he said this the speaker's eyes rested on Joseph, who stood by his mother's side, his face full of a calm dignity. He approached

the couple fully determined to lend them his aid no matter how difficult the task.

However, at the very moment he was about to speak to the young man, a police officer stepped up and demanded who Joseph was and if he had a passport. At this both Joseph and his mother trembled; for they had not foreseen such an emergency, and it had never entered Joseph's mind to ask for a passport on leaving his native town.

"Ah, Vladislav, we shall have to play the role of autocrat besides that of providence," said the gentleman, and resolutely stepped forward.

"Officer, these two people are in my charge, have the goodness to remove your hand from that man's shoulder."

"Who are you?" the policeman asked.

"One you ought to know, Kureck, for I brought you round when you were flogged three years ago."

The officer gave a sharp look, then quickly removed his cap.

"Oh, pardon, my lord doctor, I did not know," he said with cringing humility.

"It is well, Kureck; call a carriage, and do you, Vladislav, take the luggage and go home in a cab."

When he was alone with them he asked Joseph whence he came, and when he heard that it was from Dobrzyn, he gave a slight start.

"And your name, if I may ask? I am not a

policeman you know," he said with a smile.

"My name is Joseph—Joseph Rosen."

The man changed colour.

"And your father's name—let me see—was it not Solomon?" he asked, and his voice trembled.

"Yes, it was Solomon, but he is dead," said Joseph, and looked at the face of the stranger. But it told him nothing; he did not know him, and had never seen him before.

"And this is your mother? How came she to be blind?"

"I do not know. I always thought she might be cured if she had proper treatment, and we came to this city for that purpose," said Joseph.

"I thought so; well, we shall see, we shall see. By the way, did not your mother have a brother named Daniel?"

"Yes; but we do not know where he is," Joseph replied.

"Well, well, we'll have to find him. Ah there, Kureck, that is nice of you, here is something for your trouble," he said. "And now, my friends, let us go and look for some lodgings."

During the time the stranger was speaking Mrs. Rosen's head was bent forward in an attitude of close attention. Once or twice she put her hand to her heart, while her fingers moved nervously. But when she heard the stranger say, "well, we'll have to find him," her hands sank down, and as she was led to the carriage she murmured to herself, "If it be God's will."

Joseph's astonishment, sufficiently great at what had already happened, increased immeasurably when the carriage halted in front of a magnificent palace into which he and his mother were led by his new found friend. It was all miraculous and mysterious to him, and his soul bent in obedience before his God who thus took care of him and his poor mother. They had been conducted into a room, the grandeur of which reminded Joseph of the salon in Castle Wysiniaski. They sat side by side, Joseph holding his mother's hand, she feeling his constantly to assure herself that it was not all a dream.

In a few minutes their benefactor entered.

"My friends," said he, "you must be very tired after your journey, I suggest therefore, that you let my servants show you your rooms, for you will have to stay here until we can find your relative—Daniel Horovitz—that is the name, is it not? Meanwhile this shall be your home. Now, young man, follow Vladislav; he is an excellent fellow and will attend to you; and do you madam, follow Marusha. You will find a change of clothing in your room, young man, and for your mother we will find something tomorrow."

At a motion of his head they were led from the room. An hour later they came down to join him looking like different beings. Joseph looked, indeed, as the fancy of the Baroness pictured him, a young god, and the elder man gazed at

him with undisguised admiration as he shook his hand.

"I knew this was my lucky day. I have made a conquest of which an emperor might be proud," he murmured in French. How could he know that this provincial understood what he said!

"You have not seen your brother for many years," he said to Mrs. Rosen, as she drank her tea with evident enjoyment.

"No, I have not seen him in many years. God knows if he lives. He was a good boy, an ambitious boy, but I suppose he has had to struggle in the world. Life is very hard when one is poor," she said.

"Very true; but your brother is not poor, madam. You will naturally wonder how I know so much about you and your brother, but the fact is that I was in Dobrzyn many years ago. I knew your husband, and have known Daniel Horovitz all my life. Seeing you now and knowing of your poor condition, I am very angry with him for neglecting you so shamefully."

"Please do not; poor boy, he may have had his troubles and heartaches; who knows, who knows," she said.

"Heartaches!" cried the man; "madam, you have a prescient soul. Daniel Horovitz had heartaches, or rather one great overpowering heartache that nearly killed him," said the man, and his voice trembled.

"I thought so; poor Daniel. He was always

so proud and so full of strange plans and wishes," she rejoined.

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed the man. "Yes, Daniel Horovitz had the very strangest wishes; he wanted to become a great surgeon, a great scholar, a wealthy man. He wanted life and love; but,

"Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab."

Young man, you ought to study German and learn these lines by heart; they are the best antidote for the poison called 'wishes'; if they do not cure entirely they are at least serviceable as a tonic to the heart.

"They are by Heine," said Joseph, who had turned pale. He felt a strange gripping at the heart as the elder man spoke.

The latter noticed only the fact that this apparently bucolic youth knew German and knew the author of these lines.

"Precisely, and I am glad to learn that you have read the finest of poets. But to return to Daniel Horovitz, I must tell you, madam, that few people in this world so fully realized the words of the poet as he; for the only wish for whose realization he would have given his life remained unfulfilled. All his other wishes came to their fullest realization, only one failed. If anything, therefore, can be said in excuse for his

shameful neglect of you, it is that his life was terribly unhappy; that he suffered the agonies of the damned; that his hair turned white in a night of supreme torture, and that he thought only of his grief."

The man's words came almost in a whisper.

Both Joseph and his mother were profoundly moved.

"Ah, if he had sent me word," sobbed the latter, "I might have tried to console him, my poor brother, my dear Daniel."

"Ah, madam, man is selfish in his grief and often takes pleasure in nursing it. Daniel is such a man. At first he worked in poverty, his thought centred upon one aim—to raise himself from the low station of his kind. After he had succeeded and fully felt his power, he gloated in this strength and thought only of himself. Of a sudden he was taken out of himself. A power greater than he, greater than his selfishness, greater than his former aspirations, took hold of him: he fell in love. He loved the most beautiful and the sweetest woman in all the world. Your brother Daniel, madam, actually loved the Princess Berg, the daughter of the Governor General of Poland, and, madam, she returned his love; but a Jew could not marry a princess, and he was stupid enough not to crawl to the Cross. He wanted truth in his love; he did not want to utter a lie; for God created love, and did not baptize it in the name of any religion, and therefore man has no right to baptize it in falsehood.

He remained not true to his religion—for he had none in particular—but steadfast in his refusal to become a so-called Christian. The result was disastrous for him. The Princess was taken to Switzerland, and one day Daniel received a despatch bidding him to go thither. He went—and the Princess died in his arms."

The man was silent; he appeared overcome by the recital of his friend's grief. Joseph, who had listened with bated breath, hung his head. An echo of something rang in his ears—something that he faintly felt, but could not clearly define—yet it was strong enough to stir him profoundly; sufficient to make it seem like a personal experience.

Mrs. Rosen sobbed and silently prayed for her poor brother.

At length the man spoke again.

"During that one night Daniel experienced agonies such as are not in the power of man to describe, and the following morning found him a white haired man. You may perhaps have read a poem that appeared anonymously in the 'Dzienik Warszawski,' for it created a sensation. Daniel wrote it that night. I know it by heart. He called it 'The Empty Heart.' Listen!

"Alive? No, no, I'm dead;
My tortured soul is fled;
My body, cold and sore,
Her hand will touch no more
In love as oft before.

Found.

What vile and traitor hand,
By jealousy unmanned,
Has slain my gentle queen
That e'er adored hath been
By all her grace had seen?

Or was it by the nod
Of some capricious god
My gladness to disperse,
A demon so perverse
Was sent? Then him I curse!

Is simple, earthborn man
More kind and wiser than
Your God? For man appears
To shed compassion's tears
And cherish what he rears.

Is madness this, or spite,
In horror to delight?
Oh, ne'er will I believe
The reaper cuts the sheave
The tender plants to grieve.

The reaper cuts to feed
A lower kind of breed,
And where he cuts he sows,
He harrows—but he knows
The soil much richer grows.

The plants thus cut away
Give seed another day,
But human hearts that die
With agonizing cry,
Forever buried lie.

What happiness if one
Could die when love is done
And break life's iron band;
Or, with a sweep of hand,
An end of pain command.

But no, our memories live
And thousand tortures give;
Unquenched remains desire
In hearts with grief on fire
Until our souls expire.

We're proud and potent kings
When love's glad summons rings;
The golden crowns we wear
Bode not a single care
Until there comes despair.

We rule with gentle hand
That dream and flower land;
When love's sweet rose is blown,
We're kings; when love is flown,
We're KINGS WITHOUT A THRONE."

Joseph listened with bated breath. How keenly he appreciated the sufferings of that man, who appeared so intimate with the other that he recited the story of his grief with an emotion as intense as if it were his own.

After a while the professor continued: "For years afterward, grief stricken, silent, proud and cynical, Daniel lived by himself—for himself. Of a sudden, remorse and longing took hold of him; he remembered his only sister and desired

to see her, and with this feeling came a lightness of heart and buoyancy of spirit that made him almost happy. He desired to share his wealth with his only Bilinka—Bilulena——"

Mrs. Rosen sprang up.

"Daniel, Daniel, it is Daniel; I recognize the way you call me," she cried.

"Yes, Bilulena, it is I, and I believe in miracles. God be praised."

Brother and sister were clasped in each other's arms, and Joseph looked at them with profound emotion.

"Oh, Daniel; and this is my son, my own blessed son. Love him, Daniel, love him," cried Mrs. Rosen.

"No need to make any promises; he is my own," he said, as he embraced Joseph.

"The ways of the Lord are wonderful," said Mrs. Rosen; "at the time He inspired you to find your sister, He also put it into the heart of my brother-in-law Max, in America, to remember the widow of his poor brother. Max died last year, but his son sent us money, and with this we were able to come to Warsaw, as it was Joseph's purpose to take me to an oculist. Well, God be praised, for His mercy endureth forever."

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

"The nightingale that sings with the deep thorn,
Which Fable places in her breast of wail,
Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
Whose headlong passions form their proper woes."

(Byron.)

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE AMERICAN MILLIONAIRE SOCIALIST.

"What! you are the son of Max Rosen? Lord, Lord! and this is your daughter? Wife, wife! Come in for a minute," cried Mr. Alphonse Epstein, the banker.

A tall, white haired and imposing looking woman came in and bowed to the strangers.

"Wife, you cannot guess who this gentleman is, you cannot guess. He is the son of Max Rosen who married Eva Kohn, your cousin, and after her death went to America," he cried.

Mrs. Epstein appeared surprised, and shook hands with the stranger.

"Why, it must be nearly thirty years since Max went away; you were quite a boy then," she said, "And is this your daughter?"

"My only child," the man replied.

"I am glad to meet you, my dear," said the elderly woman, and kissed the girl. Then she looked at her critically and closely.

"Upon my word, she is beautiful; and what is your name?" she asked.

"Beatrice," the girl replied.

"A beautiful name and exceedingly appropriate. Your American women must be of a different type. Where will you find a Jewish girl here that is blonde and of such exquisite features?" said the old lady.

The father's pride was flattered by this free acknowledgment of his daughter's graces, and he expressed his thanks. But the girl felt embarrassed and half regretted that her father had taken her to see these people. Mrs. Epstein unintentionally added to her discomfort by asking,

"And where is her mother?"

"Her mother has passed away," Mr. Rosen replied.

"An orphan! God pity us, my dear lamb, we shall have to love you so much more," said Mrs. Epstein, putting her arms around the girl.

This act of genuine sympathy touched Beatrice, and without knowing why she began to sob.

"Well, well, little lamb, don't cry. Take off your things, and make yourself at home."

Meanwhile Mr. Epstein sent forth a fusillade of questions, which the American strove hard to answer. The appearance of this distant connection impressed Epstein favorably. Still, he might be inclined to presume on the relationship and desire to draw on the bank for funds; one can never tell and it was best to know how to arrange matters in the future.

"You have come to Warsaw at a bad time," said the banker. "Affairs here are uncertain, the people are restless, and to succeed in anything a good deal of capital is required. Unless one travels for pleasure, as I hope you do, then Warsaw is not a bad place to visit."

"I came here on business and may stay here indefinitely," said the American.

"In Warsaw?"

"No, in the province."

The American fell a little in the banker's estimation. A man who lives in the province is a small man and Banker Epstein did not deal with small men. And yet the American had said that he came on business. To come from America to Poland on business must mean something.

"The province, notably the Polish province, is a bad place to live in, unless one has a great fortune, can live in a castle and do business in one of the great cities; of course, there is but one city in Poland—," said Epstein.

"I am sure of it; but I have at present no thought of engaging in business of any sort unless the reform movement I have in mind can be called business," the American rejoined.

"Reform movement," cried the banker, "you are not, I hope a wandering preacher of revolutionary ideas like the crazy men that are at present working in Russia? If you are you will lose your time and get yourself into trouble; the time is not ripe for that sort of thing."

"I am nothing of that sort," Rosen said, smiling. "I am here on a mission to find some poor relations and to create as much happiness in the little town of Dobrzyn, where my father was born, as is possible with a fortune far in excess of my needs."

"But it requires an immense fortune to indulge in that sort of amusement," cried the banker. "I should be sorry if at the age of forty—you cannot be a day more—you were to commit a folly that you would regret at the age of sixty."

Rosen smiled.

"If I lived ever so extravagantly I could not spend what my income is for one year. Why then should I seek to gather more millions?"

"Millions!" cried the banker, "Millions of what?"

"Dollars," said the other, amused at the banker's amazement.

"Have you a gold mine?"

"No; but railroad securities amounting to something like nine million dollars, besides some minor interests that may bring the total up to about fifteen million dollars."

"And how did you get all this money?" asked the banker aghast.

"The bulk of the fortune was made by my father from inventions and railroad interests. Our fortune grew almost despite ourselves. It was only at my father's death-bed that I learned how great a sin a man commits who gives his

soul to the making of money to the exclusion of all else. In the race for fortune my father forgot his nearest of kin who lived in poverty. I have come to repair the wrong."

The banker began to feel rather small by the side of this giant; but the criminal inutility to which the American was putting his vast wealth irritated him.

"Charity is well enough, but business is business, and business, sir, is as much of a duty as charity. Business means civilization, enlightenment, it means peace or war. If all rich men were to think as you do, there would be an end to all commerce and the beggar would ride the high horse. And, my friend, what would become of our nobility? We live by our nobility. They need money, they spend money, and they come to us for it. This is business, this is life."

"I do not know anything about the present condition of your nobility, but I do know that when a man has reached a certain degree of wealth and is assured that he can spend only a certain sum annually to satisfy all his wants, it is criminal for him to draw more money from others and add it to his already large store. Nor can I see how commerce could possibly suffer if instead of charging a man ten cents for a loaf of bread I charged him two cents, when the loaf of bread costs me only a cent and a half. Large profits always mean the hurt of some one and the benefit of none. Debit and credit, income and expense, labor and capital, all must be propor-

tionate and relative, otherwise there will be arrogance on one side and dissatisfaction on the other," said the American. "And lastly, sir, the accumulation of vast capital is, I think, a mania, a disease," he added.

"But you forget that rich men invest and reinvest their money, and that means wages and expenditure. Often, too, a man is forced to provide for the family of a servant that is good for nothing," the banker rejoined.

"You naturally would have to provide for him, since your negligence of his character caused his condition," said the American.

"That means that we are responsible for any man we employ, any servant we get to do our work," cried the banker.

"So you are. When you are loading a wagon or a boat you first consider its capacity, and when you are ready to start you do not deliberately run into ruts in the road or shoals in the river; and a man ought to be considered as good as a wagon or a boat. Then, also, it is wrong to do a half charity to a workingman when he is entitled to a full right. You speak about the rich man investing his money. Pay a man five roubles for the work for which you paid him two and he will become an investor in his turn. He, too, will build himself a house and employ people and he will have to pay a proportionate wage to those he employs. Thus you would run down the scale and raise mankind all around," said Rosen.

"That would give the low brutes a chance to play the great lords, or to get drunk and raise a row," the banker rejoined with disdain.

"I do not believe either would occur. Labor would not 'play the lord' because men in general have a natural respect for position, notably for financial position of another. Secondly, the men that get drunk and raise a row are not men that receive the highest, but the lowest wage. The devil-may-care feeling does not rule the man whose position brings him a handsome wage each week, who has a family to support and a position to maintain in the circle where he moves; the feeling of total carelessness only rules the man who feels that he has not much to lose."

"Your argument is based on the theory that all men are rich and able to pay a high wage," the banker said with a sneer.

"Not at all; but there are a great many rich men that could make very many poor men happier and better. I am making an earnest effort in this direction. I believe that a great individual fortune should be active for the benefit of humanity, directly or indirectly. Directly, by raising the standard of manhood of all around you. Employ men and let them earn their bread and butter—I insist on the butter—and indirectly, through investment or ordinary commerce. But deal honestly, pay the best wages you can with your means, and have the satisfaction of knowing that there are no tears

flowing while you enjoy your rest, no curses hurled at you while you amuse yourself with your friends at the club or with your dear ones at home," said Rosen.

"This is rank socialism," cried the banker.

"If the earnest effort to do good to our fellow men when one has the means can be called socialism, then I am a socialist," the American rejoined.

"Well, a rich man can do anything, and here in Poland one can do a great deal more with money than elsewhere. But just now I crave for something more than argument. Wife, dear," cried Mr. Epstein, "please, let us have tea; you see," he said to Rosen, "we live in English style and have tea instead of coffee. How old is your daughter?"

"Eighteen."

"A delightful age; well, maybe you can find something good here for her; our young men, particularly of the nobility, are not so bad. Of course, it costs a good bit of money, but then the connections! When one has reached a certain position in the financial world one does not care to associate with the low class of Jews nor with any Jews."

"It is strange, how our ideas differ," said Rosen. "My inclination is the other way. I want to do all the good I can to all alike, but if possible, a little more to my own people, because they have had so little happiness among the nations of Europe."

"You have queer ideas," said the banker, "but I will confess that I like you immensely. Now come, let us all go out for a drive in the Lazienki Park. Our daughter will follow us on horseback, when she returns. Well, sweet Miss New York, how do you like it here?" said the banker, standing in front of Beatrice.

"I like it very much indeed, and I love Aunt Epstein," she replied, putting her arm in the old lady's.

"Well, now, that is charming. Now, Howard —I think I'd better call you by your first name. I'm old enough to be your father, eh?"

"By all means," said Rosen, " you honour me."

"Then take Mrs. Epstein, and I'll take Miss New York," he said, offering his arm to Beatrice.

When they drove toward the botanical gardens, a carriage passed them. Mr. Epstein nearly doubled, so low and profound was his salute, and Beatrice looked after the carriage with eyes that bespoke a deep emotion.

"The young man to the right of us is Count Waldeck, Casimir de Lack," the banker said, and his mouth watered as he recited the full name, "the white haired gentleman by his side is Professor de Horovitz, physician and surgeon to Prince Berg and elevated to the nobility by his majesty the Emperor of Russia, and facing them was the professor's nephew. They visit us occasionally; both are very wealthy."

Mr. and Mrs. Epstein tried to entertain their guests and to explain the sights to them, but

while Beatrice appeared to be attentive, her mind was in reality wandering, following a dream, an image, that had flashed across her horizon.

"When I come to think of it," said Mr. Epstein, "I shall see Count Lack to-morrow and will secure for you a letter of introduction to his people, if—if you are bent on going to Dobrzyn."

"I should deem it a favour, but I could scarcely accept a letter when I have not met the young man," said Rosen.

"That can be done to-morrow at my office. By the way, do you carry a letter of credit?" asked the banker.

"Well, not exactly, but I have an open account with the Rothschild banking house," the American replied.

"Well, then you don't need me," said the banker rather regretfully.

"On the contrary, I shall need you very much and shall transfer my account as soon as I am settled," was the rejoinder.

The introduction to Count Waldeck took place at the office as the banker had promised, and after a spirited conversation the three went to the Café de Paris for luncheon.

"You so remind me of my friend Horovitz, the Professor's nephew, that at times I thought he was speaking. Your ideas are very much alike; he, too, uses the great means at his command to benefit the unfortunate, but he is almost a slave to his work. Night and day he goes amongst the

poor and sick and lends them his aid," said the Count. "I wish you two could meet."

"Some day I may meet him, for he is the very person I want to help me in my own work of reform, and I will gladly place a certain sum of money at his disposal. But at present I have a duty to perform which is more pressing. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing your lordship again soon, if not here, then in the province," said Rosen.

"I shall not be at home for another month, and perhaps not before Christmas; but I will send word to my parents and they will probably call on you."

They shook hands and parted. Two days later Rosen and his daughter were on their way to Dobrzyn.

CHAPTER II.

COUNT AND COUNTESS DE LACK.

His visit to Warsaw had given the American a fair idea of the conditions of life in Poland, and during the few days he was there he saw enough to convince him that the level of civilization among the better classes was high. The poverty among the lower classes of the city was appalling, but he saw also that all the wealth of the Rothschilds could not have improved their condition. Misery was too deeprooted amongst the people. He was glad to get away.

The beauty of the town of Vlotzlavek heightened his good impression of Poland. The public buildings, the squares and gardens, all had a pleasing appearance.

"I am agreeably surprised with the conditions hereabouts. I wonder how we shall find Dobrzyn?" he said to Beatrice.

"Do you really intend to live in that little town?" she asked.

"Certainly not, if you do not like it, dear; but you know I have some affairs to settle. It cannot be worse than some of the French villages or other small places in Europe," he said.

"That is quite true, and then it was grandpapa's wish, and oh, I am so eager to see our relatives. Judging by Mr. Sager's description of

cousin Joseph, he must be a wonderful young man," she said, gazing into the distance.

"I am only sorry I could not get here sooner. I cannot imagine why he failed to answer my letter and acknowledge my cheque."

"Perhaps he cannot write English," said the girl, trying to find an excuse.

"I am afraid that is not the reason," he rejoined, and his brow clouded.

Their conversation was interrupted by the hotel clerk, who announced that the carriage stood ready to take them to Dobrzyn, and that all the trunks and boxes were on the wagons.

"We had to get two wagons with four horses to each wagon, as the road to Dobrzyn is uphill all the way."

Howard Rosen paid his bill and was exceedingly liberal to the *personnel* of the hotel, for he had been charmed with their treatment of him and his daughter.

After a long drive through some of the finest scenery in Poland, they arrived in Dobrzyn late in the afternoon, and the first shock the American received was through being told that there was not an hotel in the town, and that there was absolutely no place where they could stay overnight.

The teams had halted on the square, and a few moments later the greater portion of the population was congregated about the newcomers. Through the help of a Polish companion, whom Rosen had engaged for Beatrice and had brought

with them, they found out that one Martsup sold wine to the nobles and sometimes gave them lodging in his great three-storied house.

On hearing that they were friends of the Count of Vielga, Martsup was only too glad to accommodate them. Their baggage was taken to the stores below and they were shown into suitable rooms.

As soon as Beatrice was comfortably settled, her father went out to seek his relations. But the door of the little cottage in Back Street was shut and there was no answer to his knocks.

"Whom do you seek?" asked the boy who had shown him Mrs. Rosen's house.

"The widow Rosen and her son Joseph," he replied.

"Oh, they have disappeared, and the people say that the *Shidim* (evil spirits) have carried them away," said the boy.

Rosen stood as if rooted to the spot.

"Gone?" he said.

"Yes, clean gone and no one knows where; it is a great mystery; they say that Reb Moise Libe knows but will not tell."

"Show me the way to Reb Moise Libe," said Rosen.

He received but little comfort from the old scholar.

"I would not have mentioned his name as I did not want to draw attention to him, but you are, of course, different. You desire to fulfill a sacred duty, and I know no one more worthy of

your help. But I cannot tell you where he is, except that he is in Warsaw."

"Thank you, Rabbi," said Rosen. "It is enough to know that he is in Warsaw; I shall find him if I am obliged to hire every detective in Russia."

"No, no, my friend, you must not do that; it might cause them great trouble. You must not employ a Christian at all. There are plenty of Jews in Warsaw, I dare say, who know every house and every person in the city; get one of these and you will succeed with less danger to the welfare of your kindred," said the Rabbi.

Rosen saw the wisdom of the advice, but it appeared to him that if he were to follow it, he might as well first learn a little more about his cousin. But the other would not yield the least point that might give him a clue to the secret Joseph had entrusted to him.

"All I can say is that he was my pupil ever since he was a little boy, and I can say also that there is not a soul on earth more pure than his. If I had a son I would not wish him a better man than Joseph."

This speech gave a keener edge to Rosen's desire to see his relative, and as he was going toward the square he vowed to spare neither trouble nor expense to find his people. He believed this to be so easy a task that he was almost joyous as he told Beatrice that Joseph and his mother were in Warsaw, and that they would soon be in Dobrzyn.

"But why don't we go to Warsaw and join them there?" said the girl.

"I must stay here a while," her father replied. "I hope you will not feel bored in this place, my pet. Remember, my own dear daughter, that I have a serious motive in staying here, one as weighty, if not weightier, than the one of finding our relatives."

"Papa Howard Rosen, how could you think I would ever question your motives? Whatever you do is right," she said, resting her head on his breast.

"And yet, dearest, I like you to know what I am doing. But this case is not ripe and I don't want you to bother your head with it yet. We shall make this our home for the present, and as soon as I have seen the Count of Vielga I shall go to work to build a house of some sort."

Fortune had so arranged that the following day was the annual Fair in Dobrzyn, and the peasants from the neighboring towns and villages came to buy or sell or to amuse themselves. The Square was filled with traders' booths, little restaurants and all sorts of devices for amusement. To this Kirmess (as the fair was called) came also many of the nobles, who sold horses and wheat to the big dealers and incidentally indulged in politics over a bottle of wine at Martsup's. Among the nobles who attended the Kirmess that day were the Count and Countess of Vielga, who drove up to Martsup's house.

Martsup rushed into Rosen's room and told him the news.

"Shall I tell him that you are here?" he asked.

"By no means," said Rosen; "the Count does not know me and the chances are that he has never heard my name, but I have a letter to him."

Martsup went away not at all pleased. A letter to the Count! Any beggar could get a letter to the Count or to the Emperor. What was that? However, as he left the room, Mrs. Martsup rushed up to him.

"Henry, is Rosen the man's name?" she whispered.

"Well, it is; what of it? He has a letter, any——"

"Hush, the Count has asked for him, wants to see him, and would like to know when he can have the honour?"

"What—what!" cried Martsup, open-mouthed.

"Yes; let me go in."

"No, I'll go in."

He turned and actually removed his cap.

"The honorable Count of Vielga wishes to see you, Mr. Rosen," he said.

"I shall see the Count in a few minutes. Pray conduct him to the salon."

"The Count is in the salon," said Martsup.

"Which salon?" asked Rosen.

"Why, mine, of course, where the Count always stays when he is here, and to-day he is here with the Countess," the host replied proudly.

"That will not do," said Rosen. "You will please conduct the Count and Countess to our salon. Or, better still. Martha," he said to his daughter's maid, "go with this gentleman and ask the Count and Countess de Lack into our room. My daughter and I will be with them in a few moments."

The young woman did not wait for Martsup to lead her. She brushed by him and a few moments later the distinguished visitors were in the salon.

The evident surprise in the eyes of both parties as they met was too strong to be concealed, although they were people of the world and knew how to control their emotions.

"Our dear son has apprised us of your coming and we have hastened to bid you welcome," said the Countess. "But our son has not told us of the young lady, your daughter. He will be surprised when he learns what he has missed in Warsaw."

An hour was passed delightfully. The Count showed himself well informed on American affairs and Rosen's suggestions about social reforms were listened to with great attention by both the Count and his wife.

"Of course one must know one's ground and the subject matter thoroughly," said Rosen. "Perhaps reforms such as I have in mind might work better in England or America, where the conditions are different. But it seems to me that one can encourage workingmen without insti-

gating a social revolution. I want to see people at work; idleness is a crime. I also want to pay the workingman a fair wage for his labour; to underpay a workman is the greatest stupidity an employer can commit, for no underpaid workman is ever proud of or faithful to his employer, and where this is lacking there can be no good work. I see that this town has no hotel; I conclude that it has no bank. I know that I was worn out with fatigue of the journey from Vlotzlavek to this place by road, when there is the broad Vistula waiting for steamers to bring commerce and passengers. There ought to be no difficulty about driving the demon of poverty from this town."

When the Count rose to leave, he assured Rosen of his hearty support in anything he undertook, and that if he desired to go to Plotzk to get permission to build or to acquire any concession, he would give him a letter to the Governor.

Rosen accepted the offer gratefully and said he would call within a day or two, as he then intended to go to Plotzk.

"But not alone, you must not call alone. We want you to bring your daughter; she can stay with us during the time you transact your business in Plotzk," said the Countess.

"Your ladyship honours me; I am much obliged," said Rosen.

On parting the Countess kissed Beatrice and as the Count held her hand he said:

"Mademoiselle, I never knew what envy was until this moment. I envy Mr. Rosen. God did not give us a daughter. Permit me to kiss your hand, Mademoiselle."

But Beatrice held up her face to him in a manner that showed her deep veneration for the aged Count, and he bent and kissed her forehead.

Notwithstanding the strong liking that the Count and the Countess had conceived for Beatrice and her father, they felt puzzled at their appearance in the town of Dobrzvn. Why had they come? What was their object in taking up their residence in this part of the country when they might as well have stayed in Warsaw? Why did they call themselves Jews when they showed neither in manner nor features the least resemblance to the race? The father looked more like a distinguished Frenchman than a Jew, and the daughter was so clearly of a northern type that it was hard to believe she was aught else.

"This much is certain," said the Count, "the man is a relative of the Epsteins, and one must feel a certain respect for the relatives of one's banker, particularly when the relative in question can afford such expensive philanthropic amusements as this gentleman has indulged in and wishes to continue."

"A man's argument! It is only the money that impresses you. I look at it from an entirely different point. I feel that this girl has good

blood in her veins. I wish I could find out who they are," said the Countess.

"She will be at the Castle to-morrow or the next day; perhaps she will tell you. The gods are always gracious to an inquisitive soul," the Count said with a smile.

"Perhaps," she said and sighed deeply.

The Countess de Lack was not sure that she would find the solution to the problem that the appearance of the American girl presented, although she wished for nothing so keenly and for which she had prayed so earnestly. With a loving husband and an admirable son, Countess de Lack was yet lonely and unhappy. Her unhappiness, dating back from girlhood, at which time her mother and younger sister mysteriously disappeared, became more intense as the years passed. She longed for her mother and hoped that God in His mercy would some time in this life bring her face to face with her. She had never loved her father, whose cruelty drove her despairing mother with the infant in arms to seek safety either in death or in distant lands, and though with his demise the proud name of de Pauli became extinct, she was almost glad to be alone. His regrets and lamentations in later years were as keen a torture to her as the loss of her beloved mother. She was alone; for her cousin, Baroness Levanovska, the only surviving relative and conditional heiress to the de Pauli estates, was not a person with whom she could live in close intimacy. The difference in their

ages and dispositions, but, above all, material interests, acted as a bar. Countess de Lack considered Amanda Levanovska an usurper of her sister's rights, and the Countess had an unshakable conviction that her sister was alive. Where was that sister? The Countess would have given ten years of her life to know—to know it now that she had seen the American girl who so suddenly had awakened all the dormant longing in her soul. She felt herself drawn to her by a power as strong as it was mysterious, yet she dared not speak of it to her husband, who would laugh her out of countenance—the American was a Jewess: that was enough to silence all arguments, all so-called presentiments. Polish nobles may seek lost relations among Russians or Gypsies, but among Jews, and Americans at that; ridiculous! Besides, there was that "episode" in the Countess' life for which one man at least died at the hand of another. Guilty or innocent, it was best to let the dead past bury its dead, although she dreaded and yet hoped the best from the future.

CHAPTER III.

BEATRICE AND THE BARONESS.

"Ah, Baroness, you ought to see the new people that have come to Dobrzyn. I saw them yesterday; they are stopping at Martsup's. I understand that the man, who is said to be very wealthy, is going to build a big house here," said the doctor.

"That is not very interesting, Pan Doctor," said the Baroness, lying back languidly. "Why do you not bring me the news I want?"

"My dear Baroness, don't you think you are chasing a *fata morgana?* Yushu is dead; there can be no doubt about that. We have searched for two years, and not a living soul seems to know anything about him or his mother. But supposing he lives, will you mourn for him all your life? Don't you think he is ungrateful not to give a sign as to his whereabouts?"

"Don't say that, doctor. If there be any gratitude it should be all on my side. He saved my life," she said.

"It passes my understanding how the young Jew could be so blind as to go away from you; but then he may have had his mind set on his cousin, who is superb. I saw her yesterday."

The Baroness sat up as if electrified.

"His cousin, the American girl? You must be dreaming, doctor."

"Not in the least. Of course, you know that they are intimate with the de Lacks."

"That is nothing; I know all about the letter Waldeck sent and the girl's visit to Vielga; but what concerns me is your statement that the girl is his cousin. How did you find it out?"

"I attended old Libe and he told me of the relationship."

"I have a feeling that the old man knows where Yushu is. If it were not that I have a great regard for him because he was Yushu's teacher, I would have him tortured to get the secret from him," she cried, and her eyes gleamed wildly.

"But it may be that he does not know. You must not follow your impulse too much. Do you hear much from Rachelka?" he asked, desiring to lead her mind to another subject.

"Rachelka! Why, yes. I hear from her often. Her aunt died last autumn and left her a large fortune, which the sweet soul spends on the sisters and on the sick. She seems to be quite happy since she joined the Church and does her works of mercy, the dear creature."

"I wish you would turn your mind to some such work; you know this sort of languishing will ruin your health," said the doctor.

"Do not fear for my health, it is very good. I am interested just now in this American Jewess. Do you think she knows where Yushu is?"

"Quite possible; they are relatives and they

would most likely let him know they were coming to Europe."

"And the father is building a house, then she will go to Warsaw or elsewhere and marry him and bring him here to live," she said, and her face turned ghastly pale with the dread of such a possibility. She sprang up.

"Come, doctor, I want to see this Jewess. I want to find out if she is really as beautiful as Countess de Lack says," she cried.

"I think the Countess did not exaggerate. Nor is the girl's beauty of the Jewish type."

But the Baroness did not hear him at all; she hastily put on her hat and left the room. The doctor followed quietly. He felt distressed at her sorrow, which, he well knew, was beyond his comfort.

"I shall go to Martsup's and see her," said the Baroness as she and the doctor stepped into the carriage.

"Let us hope the sight will satisfy you," the doctor rejoined. Inwardly he told himself that the Baroness was courting danger to her own peace of mind; but he was afraid to express his thoughts.

It seemed as though fate meant to grieve the Baroness more keenly, for the first person she met on entering the Martsup house was Beatrice Rosen.

For a few moments the two women looked at each other in blank amazement. The Baroness, recognizing the superlative beauty of the Amer-

ican girl, felt a faintness at her heart as she contemplated her supposed rival. Beatrice, entirely unconscious of the meaning of the other's scrutiny, regarded the newcomer with undisguised admiration.

"Are you attending to the patrons?" asked the Baroness in the Polish language.

"*Vous me pardonnerez, mais je ne parle pas Polonais.* Madam Martsup!" Beatrice called out.

"Do not call," said the Baroness haughtily. "I desire to talk to you."

Beatrice was so glad to hear the beautiful woman speak French that she did not notice the haughtiness.

"*Madame——*" said Beatrice haltingly.

"*La Baronne,*" the other put in. "You are an American, I believe?"

"Yes, *Madame la Baronne,*" Beatrice emphasized.

The Baroness felt rather uncomfortable; she realized that she was not living up to the traditions of the Polish nobility, whose graciousness to strangers has ever been their characteristic.

"I am told that you are going to reside here permanently," she said with greater friendliness.

"It is my father's intention to spend here several months in the year. But I do not know his plans," Beatrice answered.

"You have relatives here, I suppose?"

"We have distant relatives in Warsaw."

"Distant relatives! You have visited them?"

"Yes, we spent several days there, but I like this place very much."

"Then your relatives will come here to see you?"

"I cannot tell," said Beatrice; she became conscious that she was being questioned. At this moment Mrs. Martsup came into the room and asked the Baroness what she could do for her. Beatrice rose and, bowing to the Baroness, went from the room.

"You may send me a case of Rhine wine and a case of good Burgundy. By the way, Madam Martsup, is it true that this American is related to some poor Jews in this town, to one Ras or Ros?" she said.

"Oh, yes, Rosen; they are cousins. The widow and her son have disappeared and no one knows anything about them," Mrs. Martsup answered.

"But they know, I suppose, where their relatives are?"

"Not at all, your ladyship, although they have sent everywhere and asked everybody. They think, however, that they are in Warsaw," said the woman.

"Ah, well, it is of no importance to me; adieu, Madam Martsup, and have the wine sent to-day, please."

The Baroness went to the doctor's. She was not satisfied. The American girl had disquieted her.

"I am sure she knows where he is," the Bar-

oness said, "and it drives me mad. I do not know, but it seems to me that I have seen her somewhere; her features are familiar; she does not look like a Jewess, either. There is some mystery in all this."

"What is that to you, Baroness? Why trouble yourself about things you cannot alter?" said the doctor.

"Every one is not of the same even temperament as Dr. Maral," she retorted. "All the advice you can give me is travel, travel. I have traveled like a crazy woman all over Europe, and what is the result? I am as unhappy to-day as I was when you found me after that terrible scene two years ago. I envy the poorest beggar in the street. What shall I do, what shall I do?" she cried.

"Poor child, I pity you. Ah, why did your love go out to the young Jew? He is excellent, certainly, but then you could never have married him. Try to forget. Marry someone else; there is your cousin Waldeck, I understand that he will be at home for Christmas; why not marry him?" said the doctor.

"I do not love any other man in this world, and if this Jewess takes him from me, let her beware," she cried.

Poor Beatrice! She had not the faintest idea that she was the cause of Baroness Levanovska's unhappiness. Notwithstanding the coldness of the Baroness the American girl had taken no dislike to her.

"She is as beautiful as an angel," she told her father, "and it seems to me that I have seen her somewhere. I am sure I have seen her before."

"In the mirror," said Mr. Rosen, "you saw her when you looked at yourself. You look enough alike to be sisters or at least cousins."

"Then you have seen her before and never told me a word; oh, you horrid papa to so deceive your own daughter," she cried.

"I saw her only once, but forgot to tell you. I trust you will pardon me, little lady," he said, putting out his hand to her.

"On condition that it never shall happen again."

"Never."

"Then you may kiss me," she said.

Howard Rosen had of course told but half the truth. He had not only seen the Baroness, but he had made careful inquiries about her, and during the time he spent in Plotzk had gone into a thorough examination of certain properties belonging to the Baroness Levanovska in her own right as descending from the noble house of De Pauli, a fact which would have caused the Baroness great chagrin had she suspected it. But Howard Rosen was a careful business man and kept his affairs to himself; even his daughter, whom he adored, knew practically nothing of what he was doing in Poland. What she knew was what everybody else knew and saw, namely, that he was contriving to stir up the sluggish blood of the inhabitants of the town, and that he

appeared to have but one aim in view, to break up its hoary traditions of poverty. He had spent a great deal of money in Plotzk to get concessions from the governor. His building gave employment to scores of people. Then he astonished the people of the entire neighbourhood by an announcement, which the Count de Lack caused to be sent to every landowner far and wide, that steam mills for milling grain and factories for wool spinning would be erected in Dobrzyn by Mr. Howard Rosen and the Count de Lack, and that the firm would also do a general banking business and lend money to nobles and other land owners for the purpose of the better cultivation of their lands.

This activity brought prosperity to all classes of the people, and many and profound were the blessings given to the American and to his beautiful daughter, who went among the poor like a good fairy, giving sympathy and help to those in need. Yet those who created so much happiness were unhappy themselves; for every post that brought discouraging news regarding the search for Joseph and his mother lowered their spirits and made Beatrice wretchedly unhappy. She had set her cousin Joseph upon a pedestal for worship. Daily she used to go to the old Rabbi Moise Libe and hear from his mouth again and again the story how Joseph came and asked to be taught the Law and the Talmud. The doctor and the priest had yielded to her charm, and from them, too, she heard what sort of a man

this young kinsman of hers was. Even Kaminski was made to repeat the wonderful story of Joseph's life, and the worthy policeman was ready to give his life for this girl whose sympathy for Joseph was enough to win his regard, even without the liberal presents Beatrice had made him. She worshiped her idea of Joseph; to her his soul was as the soul of a saint, his heart as the heart of a lion. In him were combined all the virtues that a maiden's fancy could possibly conceive. She seemed to know every detail of his life, so full was her information; the only thing she did not know—and this was the one thing that could have hurt her pure heart—was Baroness Levanovska's love for Joseph. Thus she could meet the Baroness face to face at Castle Lack and love her, for her gentle soul could hate no one, whilst the Baroness, the more she saw of the Jewess, could feel nothing but a growing hatred of her.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE BALL.

Castle Lack was decorated from roof to cellar. The arched approaches were festooned with evergreen and flowers from the hothouses. Over the massive entrance, between the two noble towers of the Castle, there was set a cauldron containing a mixture of pitch and hemp, which at night was to blaze as a beacon light. Within the Castle painters and carpenters were busy putting the finishing touches to a work that had been going on for weeks. Invitations had been sent to the neighbouring nobility to attend the reception to be given in honour of Count Waldeck de Lack, only child and heir to Casimir de Lack, Imperial Councillor, etc., etc. Incidentally it was mentioned that it was to celebrate Count Waldeck's success in the "Imperial States Examination," in which he had taken the first place, together with the nephew of the famous Professor de Horovitz, who, having received the imperial ring, publicly gave it to his friend, Count Waldeck. It was not certain whether the Professor's nephew would come to Vielga, as he was very busy in Warsaw, the Countess explained to Mr. Rosen.

"All I can say is that if you permit this child to catch cold, I shall be very angry, Mr. Rosen.

I want her to be the queen of the evening. It will be delightful," she said as she left.

"I wish I could account for the strange fancy that draws me to this child. If she were my own flesh and blood I could not think more fondly of her," she said to herself.

On entering the hall she was caught from behind and held by two strong arms, while a man's cheek was pressed against her own.

"Who is it?" cried the captor.

"Waldeck!" she exclaimed, and soon mother and son were in each other's arms.

"We did not expect you before to-morrow; this is a delicious surprise."

"I thought you would like it, *dushka* (darling soul)," said he, laying his hand on his mother's shoulder. "I say, dushka, have you been bathing in the waters of eternal youth? You are more beautiful than any woman I know."

"Thank you, dear heart; I am glad to please my boy, whom I adore."

"And yet it appears that I am not the only possessor of your heart. There is your Jewess, of whom you have written so glowingly," he said.

"Wait until you see her," was the reply.

"And how is he? Has he improved on acquaintance, I mean from your—the woman's—point of view?" he asked.

"I have never met a more liberal or a more unassuming man," said the Countess.

"Epstein tells me that he is worth something

like thirty million roubles. It seems incredible. He made a very good impression upon me when I first saw him in Warsaw. He reminded me of my friend Horovitz."

"Warsaw rings with that young man's name. Is he really so great, or is he merely the fashion?" she asked.

"Petit mere, Warsaw does not know a hundredth part of what he really is. Nor do I pretend to know. You know Merau, the great painter? Well, he told me that all the work he had done so far was not worth speaking of after he had heard young Horovitz's criticism. The scientists say the same thing after he discusses any subject with them. It is the same in the case of anything he takes in hand."

"Has he been in love?" asked the Countess.

"I have not the least idea; but—oh, it is the pretty Jewess you are thinking of. I see *ma petite mere* is already scheming to match the matchless souls. Voila, I have no objection. Where is papa?"

"He has gone down to look at the new well they are boring," she said.

Waldeck kissed her and went to see his father.

In the afternoon of the following day the guests began to arrive. They came from Vlotzlavek, Lipno and Plotzk. The great halls were soon filled with men and women who were charmed with the welcome provided for them.

The political temper of the Poles had gradually toned down to a philosophical acceptance of

the inevitable, and although many felt chagrined at the presence of Count Radzin, a Tartar and Colonel of a regiment of Cossacks that had acted outrageously in the province, the majority appeared pleased or indifferent at the presence of a number of Russian officers and officials.

The appearance of the Countess leaning on her son's arm was greeted with loud acclamation. The eye of the Countess searched the crowd of people to find one dearer to her than any save Waldeck. She gave a start as the Baroness Levanovska came up radiant as a sunbeam. She appeared the very image of Beatrice, and there was not in her beautiful face a trace that betrayed the misery of her soul.

"How do you do, cousin?" said Waldeck, kissing the Baroness' hand.

"I am quite well. It is so dreadfully long since I saw you that I almost forgot we were cousins," she said with a smile.

"But I did not forget, and now I am doubly glad that I kept it in mind, for you are very beautiful, Amanda," he said, bending over her.

"That a great savant such as you should not have forgotten to be polite, redeems your sex. I wonder whom your mother is greeting so affectionately," she said, with a pain at her heart, for she had recognized Beatrice. "Apropos," she continued, "you know we have become liberals in Poland, and have taken all sorts of people into our ranks. An American, a Jew, I believe, has conquered the entire aristocracy, and

has bamboozled your father into some business partnership. Oh, Waldeck, there is that dreadful Russian, Count Radzin. He has been persecuting me with his attentions for over a year. I hate him. Take me away."

But it was too late. The dreadful but handsome Russian came up, and bowing profoundly, begged the honor of offering his arm to the Baroness.

"I wish I could offer your ladyship something better than an ice, but they are serving ices in the next room and I wish to put myself at the disposal of the most beautiful woman in Poland," said the Count.

"That was exceedingly well put, and my cousin, the Baroness, must appreciate it," Waldeck put in.

"I do not agree with you. The Count did not intend it to be a compliment, as there is no Poland. But a conquered people has no choice," said the Baroness.

"Pardon, *chere Baronne,* his imperial majesty has conquered the territory, but Poland is still supreme, she is sovereign," the Count rejoined.

"I fail to see it; how?" asked the Baroness.

"In her women," the Count replied, bowing.

"C'est bien vrai," cried the old Count de Lack, who had come up with Mr. Rosen. "Permit me to introduce to your ladyship my friend, Mr. Rosen."

The Baroness inclined her head.

"Count Radzin, Mr. Rosen."

The Count, taking the hint from the Baroness, bowed politely, very politely, so politely that the sneer with which the bow was accompanied was an obvious affront. Rosen felt it, but he had already learned a lesson in Poland and concealed his resentment. He stretched out his hand to Waldeck, who grasped it and shook it heartily.

The Baroness, thoroughly pleased with Count Radzin's manner, took his arm and was led away. A moment later the Countess, leading Beatrice, came up, and as they came into full view of the three men standing under the chandelier, the latter started as if moved by the same impulse and looked at the two women with an astonishment that bordered on amazement.

The Countess and Beatrice appeared like mother and daughter, the latter a younger counterpart of the former, but with a likeness so strong that no one could possibly mistake it.

Howard Rosen was bewildered, but his mind failed to solve the puzzle. The old Count seemed seized with a sort of vertigo, and involuntarily his hand caught Waldeck's. The latter, intoxicated by the beautiful vision, asked:

"Who is she?"

The question broke the spell, but before any of them could speak, the Countess de Lack introduced Beatrice to her son, or rather him to her, for she addressed herself to the girl, saying:

"Beatrice dear, permit me to introduce to you my son, Waldeck."

Beatrice gave him her hand.

"I am glad to meet you. I have heard so much about you that I feel as if I had known you for a long time," she said.

"Let me hope, Miss Rosen, that you have heard only what was good and that I may not prove a disappointment," he said, thrilled by the melody of her voice.

"That is not likely, for to-night's impression is not the first," she said smilingly.

"How?" asked Waldeck.

"I saw you once before."

"Where?" he cried.

"In Warsaw," she said, amused at his mystification.

"In Warsaw," he said, looking at her with intense admiration, "it would have been impossible for me not to have seen you unless you were hidden behind the curtains of your window or in a closed carriage."

"Neither; I was driving in the Lazienki Park; you were in a carriage with two other gentlemen, and passed us on the way to the Botanical Gardens," she said.

"Upon my word, that is so; I remember; but——"

He felt almost pain in his regret at not having seen her then. He would have given much to have had this beautiful image in his mind.

"You were going to say," she said, looking up to him.

"That I was held in thrall by the rhythm of poetry. My friend, Joseph Horovitz, was com-

paring Mitchkievitch with Heine and he recited the verses of both with such pathos that I saw nothing and heard nothing but his voice and his face. Joseph has a marvelous face and he is a poet."

Beatrice had started at the mention of the name. Her face flushed; she felt as if the mystery were to be solved at last.

"Did you say Joseph?" she asked.

"Yes, Professor Horovitz and his nephew, Joseph Horovitz," he answered. "Do you know him?"

"Oh, no; but the name Joseph made me think of my poor cousin for whom we have searched far and wide. He and his mother disappeared from Dobrzyn and all efforts to find them have proved unsuccessful," she said.

"Is it not strange that you and I should be interested in the name Joseph? for the Joseph I know is my most intimate friend; but he is quite wealthy, so it can scarcely be your Joseph. I could tell many an interesting story of my Joseph. But they would hardly interest you," he said.

"If they are bad stories," she said smilingly, "they would not interest me."

"Bad stories!" cried Waldeck, "the stories about my friend are all good stories. I have already mentioned that he is a poet. To this I must add that he is a scientist, a linguist, a philosopher and a philanthropist."

"Is he all that?" she said, thinking that the Count was exaggerating to please her.

"He is all that and more," Waldeck rejoined. "He haunts the sick wards of the hospitals. His time, his money, and his skill are put at the service of all Warsaw. It is a privilege to be his friend."

And as he looked into her upturned face that expressed the intensity with which she was listening, he felt a sudden pain in noting that the interest he desired to concentrate upon himself had by his eloquence been transferred to another.

"And his name is Joseph?" she asked with a tenderness in her voice that augmented his pain.

"I wish I had not mentioned his name," said Waldeck.

"Why, pray?" she asked.

"Because you will grow interested in this Joseph to the disadvantage of his friend," he replied.

"You are selfish, Count," said Beatrice; "if I had a friend who was as noble as your friend Joseph I should never tire of praising him," she said.

"If he knew that I was saying as much as I have he would feel hurt, for he is the most modest of men. Many of those who live on his bounty do not know the giver. He holds that to put people under an obligation is to sow the seed of hatred in their breasts, for of all burdens the heaviest is that of enforced grati-

tude. Let us ennoble our work, he says, by not exacting any toll for it. Let us lift up mankind by cultivating their love and let us make them grateful to God who feeds the birds and the beasts of the field, and takes care of the creatures His hand has made. Man does not feel gratitude to be a burden when he takes a gift from his Father in heaven. So you will understand, Miss Rosen, that a man like that, thinking as he does, cannot possibly desire open, or indeed any, praise."

"From what I have heard of my cousin's character," said Beatrice, "I am quite sure that if he had large means, he would live and act as your friend does. And here there is a large fortune waiting for him if he would only come and take it. Oh, if we could find him!" she said, and her eyes brimmed with tears.

"I wish I could be of assistance to you, Miss Rosen," cried Waldeck.

"We have done all that earnest effort and money can possibly do to find them, but they seem lost," she said.

Waldeck's heart beat furiously; he felt he was in love with the girl. He gave no heed to the complications that might arise if he declared himself. He was intoxicated by her voice, her beauty, her perfect grace, and he might have spoken then if his mother had not interrupted by asking him to take Beatrice to the table.

"They are not lost," he whispered as he led her away, "I will find them for you."

She gave him a grateful look.

Baroness Levanovska, who sat at Waldeck's right, tried to engage him in conversation, but all his thoughts were with the American girl. His preoccupation was not lost upon the Baroness. An affront to Beatrice trembled on her lips. Only respect for the girl's father, who reminded her of Joseph, prevented her.

At length all was over,—the dinner with its speeches, the music, the theatricals conducted by the village schoolmaster; all the little details connected with an entertainment given by one of the richest Polish magnates in honor of his son—an entertainment which this son in his present condition was in no mind to appreciate; all was at length done with, and the guests returned to the great halls that were now arranged for dancing.

The band played a Mazurka. In a moment dozens of couples, flinging themselves into the spirit of the rhythm, whirled round with a clicking of heels as they wove the circles of this fascinating dance through the brilliantly lighted hall.

Beatrice and Waldeck, too, danced, but only for a few moments, and then sat down.

"I would rather not dance. It seems a sin to be gay when my poor aunt and her son may be in trouble," she said.

"You can do them no good by saddening yourself," he said.

"I suppose not, and I think you are right, only

I happened to think of them. Well, tell me something about yourself."

"Myself!" he said. "I have nothing to say about myself. Just now I should best like to talk to you about yourself. Do you believe in spontaneity?" he asked abruptly.

"It depends upon what you mean by the term," she replied.

"I mean spontaneous affection—love at first sight."

"I have read of such a thing and have heard it spoken of; but as for having any belief in it, I don't know what to say. It seems to me that people could not love each other unless they had known each other for a long time," she said.

"I can say nothing from experience either, for I have never been in love. But it seems to me that an intelligent person with quick wits and a great capacity for emotion would know at once if he really loved a woman or——"

"That would be only momentary desire," she broke in.

"Not necessarily. In love, as in all else, a beginning must be made; and passionate natures, seeing a diamond and desiring to possess it, use all their energies to get it."

"But suppose they find the diamond to be only paste?" she asked.

"The judgment of the heart is infallible and," he said, taking her hand—they were in a niche shaded by big plants—"I know that I love you."

"No, no, Count, you must not say such things.

You frighten me. I did not think your words pointed to me. Come, let us go."

Whatever more he might have said to further his suit was hindered by the appearance of the Countess, in whose train was a swarm of young men eager to dance with the beautiful American. Count Radzin boldly extended his arm to Beatrice, and she, glad to get away from a situation that began to be uncomfortable, took the Count's arm and was led away.

"How do you like her, my son?" asked the Countess.

Waldeck made no reply.

"Waldeck!"

"Yes, dear," he answered, gazing at Beatrice as she glided past them, the very incarnation of grace and rhythm.

"My dear son, remember!"

"I cannot help it, mamma, I love her and I shall love none other," he said.

"Ah, my poor child, I made you unhappy; alas, you can never marry her, she is a Jewess."

"If that be all, I shall not trouble; for either she will turn Catholic or I shall take her faith. But is it not strange I never thought of her religion while I spoke to her, and, mother dear, she does not look like a Jewess. She looks, in fact, the image of you."

"Of me?" cried the Countess.

At that moment Howard Rosen, Count de Lack and Beatrice approached them.

"You are not going already?" cried the Countess.

"I am very sorry, but we must go," said Rosen firmly.

"I wish you would stay here for the night, you and your—the young lady," said Count de Lack.

Howard Rosen felt as if some one had stuck a knife into him, so keen was the pain he felt from an unaccountable sensation which he could not explain to himself. He wanted to get away.

Countess de Lack and Waldeck heard the hesitation in the Count's words, and while Waldeck was mystified and disturbed, the Countess felt as if an icy fringe of death had touched her heart, and no sooner had the Rosens left than she went to her room. When, an hour after, the Count came in, he found her at the foot of the great silver crucifix, her head bowed low in silent prayer.

CHAPTER V.

THE PLOT.

Baroness Levanovska, who had seen at a glance that Waldeck was in love with the fair American, felt an almost irresistible desire to do her an injury. She herself was not in love with Waldeck, but she hated to think that this foreigner should come here and conquer all hearts and stand in the way of her ultimate alliance with Joseph. "She is a Jewess, and he will prefer her," she said to herself, and thus nursed her hatred till it nearly made her mad.

"In olden times one could find a knight who would do a woman's bidding," she said to Count Radzin.

"I will do anything you like," he rejoined.

"Do not make rash promises, Count. I am very exacting."

"I accept the challenge," he said.

"Well, then, come and see me at the Castle," she said.

"When may I call, *chére Baronne?*" he asked.

"Are you going to Plotzk to-night?"

"No, I shall stay here and leave late in the afternoon to-morrow," he replied.

"Then you may call on Friday," she said and smiled on him.

They spent the evening together, and when he saw her to her sleigh he had already declared

his undying love, and as the Baroness had only smiled, he took it for granted that she had accepted his suit.

On Friday the Count called and he was delighted at the friendliness of her reception.

"I am in great trouble, Count," she said.

"Pray tell me, and if I can be of any service, command me."

"If you loved a woman with all the strength of your heart and soul and some one came and desired to take her away from you, what would you do?" she asked.

"That would be impossible, because no one would dare to attempt such a thing," he answered, smiling grimly and showing his teeth obstinately set.

"But if some one should," she persisted.

"I would have him flogged to death," he said.

"Let us assume that it were not a woman in question but an estate which you had held in undisputed possession for many years, when a stranger came and tried to rob you of it. Would you fight for it?"

"Baroness, I beg you to speak more plainly. I am not an adept in mysteries and if I have to fight a foe I want to see him. I am willing to give my life for you, but I must know for what," he said.

"Very well, then, listen. Yesterday Zamanski, the lawyer from Plotzk, called upon me. He showed me papers which declared that this Jewess, Beatrice Rosen, is in fact the Countess Bea-

trice da Paula, my uncle's granddaughter and the rightful heiress to Wysiniaski. He maintains that she is the only person living that can lay claim to these estates. The thing is a secret. But if it turn out to be the truth, the disgrace will kill me. Give up my estates to a Jewess!" she cried.

"You shall not," said the Count.

"How can it be hindered?" she asked.

"It shall be prevented, if you give me the right to do it," he said.

"I give it you," she rejoined, giving him her hand.

"She shall disappear as if she had never existed," he said, kissing her hand.

"Ah, but her father watches her, and he would sacrifice anything to find her," she put in.

"It would do him no good; besides, I will have him sent to Siberia as soon as the girl is done away with. All I desire to know is her manner of living. Does she go out much?"

"Rarely, but she drives to Castle Lack every Monday."

"And when you are free of this Jewess?" he asked.

"Then you shall receive your richest reward," she replied.

"You," he cried, and caught her in his arms.

She turned deadly pale and bit her lip, but said nothing.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MARRIAGE BROKER.

Although Howard Rosen was but little identified with the Jews in Dobrzyn, they took no less keen an interest in his affairs, and talked of him with pride. There were those who criticised his "promiscuous charity" and were of the opinion that a Jew must accord all the benefits he had to bestow on none but Jews. There was a serious discussion among the elders of the Synagogue whether they should accept his offer to build a new Talmud Academy building. The main objection of some of the severely orthodox was that he had built, furnished and fully endowed a home for aged Catholics. The fanatics seemed likely to carry their point when the Rabbi interposed and declared that charity should recognize no difference of race, creed or sex, and that this rich man whom God had sent as a redeemer to the people of Dobrzyn, and who was in the counsel of the mighty in the land, must be considered as an exception to the rule by which other men are judged.

"I have been Rabbi in this community for more than twenty years and in all these years I have never received more than TEN roubles a week," he cried, emphasizing the word ten. "Now this man has come here and the first thing he did was to raise the status of the officers of

the congregation. I am receiving a princely salary, and even the under-sexton is on a salary. The house to house collection has been abolished, and peace and plenty is with us, therefore let us not offend this man lest we sin against God."

The Rabbi's speech made a deep impression, Rosen's offer was accepted with thanks and the new Academy was built.

There was, however, one person in Dobrzyn who had not benefited by Rosen's munificence, although he was poor and his wife frequently told him that he would never amount to anything.

"Everybody in town is getting rich, and all through the American; only you have nothing, and while other women have new hats and new wigs to wear on the Sabbath, I must wear my old things. I wish I had died before I ever married you," she cried and fell to sobbing.

"But don't you see, Ella dear, that other people are in a business where they can deal with the American, while I am a marriage broker. What shall I do if I cannot find a suitable match for his daughter?" he replied.

"Have you tried? Everybody says to me, 'Well, Mrs. Guilof, your husband is sure to make a fortune one of these days,' and what can I say, can I tell the world that my husband sits over his musty old books all day long and never makes an effort to go near the American?"

Mr. Guilof winced under his wife's words and made up his mind to do something toward se-

curing her a new hat and a new wig. He oiled the corkscrew curls that hung on his temples, touched up his long red beard, and put on his satin-lined fur coat and high fur cap. His wife Ella watched all these preparations with silent satisfaction, but let it appear as if she saw nothing of what was going on.

"I am going, Ella," he said.

"Going where?" she asked.

"To see Mr. Rosen."

"But you have no match for his daughter," cried Mrs. Guilof.

"My dear, you do not understand. I shall offer him the son of Jacob Praski, who has just come back from the Wilna Talmud University and is qualified to be Rabbi. If he says 'yes', then the business is done."

"But supposing the young man does not want to marry her?" she asked.

"Not marry her with so much money? Impossible! No one ever heard of such a thing."

"But you have had one experience already; don't you remember Lerko's daughter?" she said.

"Well, she was a woman; but a man, and a good Jew, is not such a fool. With the help of God I shall succeed."

"May God hear your words and let them come true," she called after him as he went out.

Mr. Guilof, however, would not take any chances on the strength of his own eloquence, so he recited several Psalms on the way and prayed God to soften the heart of the American so that

—well, he had not finished his prayer when Jan, the erstwhile stage driver, who was now in the service of Rosen, stopped his progress and asked him what he wanted.

Mr. Guilof looked supremely astonished.

"Why, I want to see Mr. Rosen, of course," he cried.

"Then wait, I will see if my master wishes to see you," said the other to his confusion.

A moment later Jan came back and told the man to follow him.

As soon as Guilof saw the American he forgot his chagrin.

"Good morning Mr. Rosen," he said.

"Good morning Mr. Guilof, what can I do for you?"

"I have come to do something for you, Mr. Rosen," said Guilof, seating himself and taking a pinch of snuff from a polished horn snuff box. He extended the box to Rosen, assuring him at the same time that it was the best French *rapee.*

But Rosen was not dwelling on snuff but upon the events that had happened the night before at the Castle. The match-maker noticed that he was preoccupied and decided to come to the point at once.

"Mr. Rosen, I am here to propose a brilliant party for your daughter, and it is no less a person than the son of Mr. Jacob Praski, of whose piety and wonderful learning you have heard."

Howard Rosen appeared to be lost in thought. Then a smile flitted across his face.

"If you bring about this affair how large a commission do you expect?"

"If you give your daughter a dower of one hundred thousand roubles, my commission would be, with your kind leave, five roubles per thousand," he said exultingly.

"Supposing I did not care to entertain any marriage proposition for my daughter?" asked Rosen.

"Then I should go away and say to myself that I was unfortunate in this business," was the sad reply.

"Of course there are other match-makers in other cities who are likely to take it up. If they come here would they call on you before they came to see me?" asked the American.

"Always; because I have a reputation, sir, far and wide, and they would not think of coming into my territory without first seeing me," he said proudly.

Rosen seemed lost in thought over the match-maker's rejoinder, then he turned to his safe and took out two hundred and fifty roubles.

"Take this money, sir, as a gift from me for the present. I shall not entertain the thought of having Mr. Praski's son as a son-in-law, nor anyone else. I also beg of you to make it your business to tell all marriage brokers that my daughter is not in the market. I shall consider this a service worth much more than the sum I pay you now. I trust you will excuse me as I have some other business to attend to."

Mr. Guilof, having taken the money, was in a position to take the hint, and, expressing his great appreciation of Rosen's wisdom and liberality, went away.

A few moments later the Countess de Lack was announced, and as she entered, Rosen was shocked at the haggard expression in her face.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOLUTION OF A PROBLEM.

"What has happened, my lady?" cried Rosen.

"Everything except death," was the answer.

"I do not understand; what has caused you trouble?"

"Beatrice," said the Countess.

"My daughter?" cried Rosen.

"There are people who do not believe that Beatrice *is* your daughter," said the Countess with a laugh that chilled his blood.

"Who dares?" he cried.

"The Count, my husband," was the reply.

Rosen fell back as if struck in the chest.

"By what right does the Count say this? He must have some strong reason for making this outrageous statement and he must know that he will be held personally responsible," he cried.

The Countess was silent.

"I beg you, madam, to tell me all. You could not possibly have come here to torture me. What does the Count say?"

"*He believes Beatrice is my daughter,*" said the Countess, and sank down in the chair, sobbing bitterly.

Howard Rosen gave a hoarse cry. He staggered back and caught at his throat as if he were choking. At last he regained sufficient strength to speak.

"This is terrible, monstrous. This accusation does not only affect you, it affects the fair name of my innocent child. I am going to thrust the lie down your husband's throat," he cried, springing to his feet.

"Howard Rosen, you will not," cried the Countess, and ran up to him. "You are my friend, are you not? In this supreme moment of my life I will not delude myself with false pride, I look upon you as my best and only friend, and it is for you to stand by me and help me unravel this mystery."

"How can I? I am an American. I know very little of affairs here. What I do know is that my wife was a Pole and of noble birth, and that my daughter is heiress to one of the richest estates in Poland."

"What was your wife's maiden name?" asked the Countess, her excitement increasing.

"Wanda da Paula."

"What——?"

The Countess uttered this one word and then fainted. When she came to herself and realised what had taken place, she burst into tears.

Rosen was moved at the sight of her grief and rose to hide his sympathy. But the voice of the Countess, with rare sweetness, called him.

"Howard, do not leave me. Come here, come closer to me. Oh, Howard, you have made me so happy. Howard, Wanda was my sister, I am a da Paula."

It was now Rosen's turn to be stupefied with surprise.

"I did not know that the connection was on this side," he said and his face lit up with a rare gladness. Suddenly his face clouded.

"You said, Countess, that the Count suspected you of being the mother of Beatrice. I have never seen you in my life, although I think that you must be the Martha whose picture I saw at my mother-in-law's house and of whom she spoke affectionately and tearfully. It was only at her death that we found she had a large estate and that she was a peeress of the Polish kingdom. With her papers and the titles, I came here at her particular request to establish my daughter's rights. Alas, I wish my poor Wanda had lived, then indeed I should have felt perfect happiness. But if you desire to give me peace of mind, tell me how the Count came to say what he did," he said, pressing her hand.

The face of the Countess became flushed.

"Of course, you do not know the reason why my mother went to America, but the truth is that my father, the Count de Pauli, being a man of ungovernable temper, became enraged because my mother gave birth to a second daughter when he had hoped for a son. He conceived a terrible hatred for my mother. He left her, and, taking me with him, settled in Paris. Notwithstanding every effort on the part of friends and relatives here and in France, he refused to go back. After many years, however,

his heart softened, and he went back to Castle Kointza-Gura, but the one he sought was gone. My mother had taken her private funds from the bank and left not a trace as to her whereabouts. No one thought that she would go to America.

"My father was stricken with remorse, and ere long his health gave away. Before his death he ordered that the estate should be divided between myself and my cousin, who was to hold the property in trust for Wanda and her heirs for a period of ten years after his death, after which it was to be held by my uncle, the Count de Pauli, forever. My father died nine years ago, my uncle was killed in the revolution, and Amanda, his daughter, now has the property.

"But all this is not to the point of that which you want to know. Well, when I was sixteen years of age I was married to Count de Lack. He was over twenty years my senior, but he was kindness itself. The country was in the throes of conspiracy and revolution at the time, and so my husband took me to Paris where my Waldeck was born. Meanwhile, my husband was called to St. Petersburg, where he remained for nearly two years.

"The Russian Ambassador to the Court of France visited me often and my father was charmed with his wit and *esprit.* Occasionally he used to take me for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne, and as my father as a rule accompanied us, there was no cause for gossip.

"However, my name was mentioned within the

Ambassador's hearing; a duel was fought and my friend was killed. My father was grieved at the scandal and we left Paris for London. But my traducers did not stop at the murder of the Russian Ambassador, they sent anonymous letters to the Count in which they spoke of my accouchement in London. He returned to Paris, the slanderer was traced and found, and he fell in the duel that resulted. He was a great personage and had persecuted me with his attentions for a long time.

"My husband had perfect faith in me until this sudden recognition of a resemblance between the dear child and myself. But God is good, is he not, Howard?"

"He is most gracious, and here comes the sweet innocent who has caused you and me all this trouble," said Rosen, as Beatrice entered.

"How did I cause you trouble, papa Howard Rosen?" she asked.

"By being the niece of this noble lady here without letting her know, and leaving me in the dark about the matter, too."

Beatrice raised her riding whip.

"When little children do not behave they are punished," she said threateningly. "What sort of joke is this, Papa Howard Rosen?"

"No jest at all, darling, your mother was the Countess' sister," he said calmly and evidently enjoying her discomfort.

But the Countess would not have him tease her any longer.

"Sweetheart, your papa tells the truth, he has but a few moments ago told me the second part of my own family history; you are my own niece," said the Countess embracing the girl.

But the intelligence nearly dazed Beatrice.

"Was not my mother a Jewess, papa?" she cried.

"By faith but not by birth. Both your mother and your grandmother took the Jewish faith a month before I was married."

The Countess rose to go.

"I must acquaint the Count with this affair and for the sake of the rare happiness I have found I shall forget what I have suffered," she said as she left them.

When the Count heard the story he fell on his knees.

"Can you forgive me, Martha?" he cried. "Forgive me, if you can, for the sake of the dear girl."

"I felt that she was ours," sobbed the Countess.

"And she shall be. Come, dear, let us go to them," he said.

The Count and the Countess went to Rosen's house and stayed to dinner, which became a sort of informal celebration of the happy event.

The news that Beatrice Rosen was a niece of Countess de Lack soon spread and letters of congratulation came from all sides, but the mistress of Wysiniaski only smiled. Then she fell on her knees before the little shrine in her boudoir and prayed with eyes aflame that God might speed Count Radzin on his errand of outrage.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WOOING.

"I am going to Warsaw to make a personal search for our people and also to see the American consul, so that we may get the papers served on Baroness Levanovska for the possession of Wysiniaski and the other estate," said Mr. Rosen to his daughter.

"But, papa dear, I have no desire to claim anything; we have enough without them, I think," Beatrice rejoined.

"Quite true, my dear; but I wish to establish your mother's rights and your own title. Besides, it will not be a bad place for my aunt and her son to live, and then a certain young lady might go there occasionally—to visit her aunt, of course," he said, putting his finger under her chin.

Beatrice blushed to the roots of her hair.

"If you will but find them, papa," she said.

"I may succeed where others have failed."

"When do you leave?"

"To-day, so get ready to come along. Auntie Epstein will be glad to see you.'"

"I shall be ready in an hour."

Beatrice went to her room and ordered her things to be packed, and in less than an hour she was seated in the carriage waiting for her father to join her. She was still waiting when

her father appeared and told her to start without him, as he had just received a despatch that required his presence in town for at least two hours longer. He would not let her wait for him, he said, as he had telegraphed to Epstein and they would meet the train at the station. He would send the maid with her as far as Vlotzlavek, and Jan and the lackey were quite enough to take care of them. Beatrice did not demur at the arrangement and soon the carriage was on it way to Vlotzlavek.

As a matter of fact, however, Rosen had received only a card sent by Waldeck, who asked for an interview, and Rosen was eager that he should not meet Beatrice. Scarcely ten minutes had passed since Beatrice had gone when Waldeck rode up to Rosen's house; he was in a happy mood and threw a handful of coins to the urchins in the street. "Let all the world be happy for I am going to see my love," he hummed. A few moments later he grasped the hand of Rosen.

"I came to salute you and my beautiful cousin," he said.

"If you had come a few minutes sooner you would have found her; she has gone to Vlotzlavek and thence she goes to Warsaw," said Rosen.

Waldeck started, but recovering himself instantly seized what he felt was almost a providential chance. Beatrice was gone so he was all the freer to ask her father for her hand.

"I love Beatrice and would ask your consent," he said simply.

"You ask what I cannot possibly grant," said Rosen.

"What objection have you?" cried Waldeck.

"I must be open with you, Waldeck. There is a chasm between us which even our relationship cannot bridge, and that is the difference in religion."

"Why, that is nothing, Beatrice can be baptized before we get married," said the young man.

"If you knew my daughter's character you would not say that," the other said quietly. "But you have not told me whether she reciprocates your feelings. Have you spoken to her?"

"I have," said Waldeck. "But while she did not encourage me, I am led to believe that if you permitted me to pay my respects to her I might win her."

"It would be in vain, for my daughter loves another."

"In America?" asked Waldeck, and there was a ring of gladness in his voice. He felt that he could cope with an American rival. In his mind rang the cynical lines:

> Woman doomed to constant fretting
> For a lover far away,
> Falls a victim to—forgetting
> When another comes her way.

If Rosen's answer was what he hoped, his

mind would be easy. But Rosen was silent and each moment increased Waldeck's despair.

"Do you mean, sir, to shatter all my hopes?" he cried.

"No; but I cannot discuss this question at present. My daughter's thoughts are centred in her cousin and his mother. It is possible that when she comes face to face with him her feeling will prove to be purely sisterly. Whatever she then decides shall be done. I only live to make her happy. She is grieving because we have been unable to find our relatives. My dear boy," said Rosen, putting his hand on Waldeck's shoulder, "try to help us. Who knows what may happen? But you see clearly that her mind is set upon one thing; try to do what you can to help us."

"I will help in the search, uncle," said Waldeck, taking Rosen's hand, "and I shall not rest until I have found them."

"God bless your efforts," said Rosen.

Waldeck bade him adieu and quickly left the room. He threw himself on his horse and rode rapidly on the road to Plotzk. He needed a good ride to clear his brain and still the turbulence of his heart.

As he skirted the forest and turned to the road to Vielga, he saw two men with carbines over their shoulders and a third leading a horse. He thought they were forest guards and paid no further attention to them.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REWARD.

The three men Waldeck had seen were two Tartars and Count Radzin, of whom it would perhaps be incorrect to say that he was on the Baroness' mission. He was in fact on his own mission. He wanted the Jewess, and although his plans were not fully laid as to what he would do with her, he intended to make a double coup and get both the Baroness and Beatrice into his power. He and his menials had been waiting for hours in a little roadside inn, watching the road to Castle Lack, when at last a peasant came into the inn and asked for a measure of vutki, "a whole measure, nothing less," he cried.

"As I love God," cried the inn keeper, "it is Gorshaleck and he wants a whole measure of vutki, and has the money, too. By the Holy Mother of Tchenstochova, Gorshaleck, you shall pay first for the measure you owe or at least tell me how you came by all this good money."

Gorshaleck appeared unaffected by the inn keeper's speech.

"I was working to-day for the great Pan Rosen and I always get my money at once. I helped Janushek in the stables, for the young lady was going to Plotzk, and as Jan drove her I went home," the peasant replied.

"You are moving in fine society, Gorshaleck, and I suppose the young lady, Panna Rosen, told you that she was going to Plotzk?" said the inn keeper.

"No, I asked Jan, and he said, 'maybe, Gorshaleck, we are going to Plotzk', is not that enough?"

Radzin and his companions, who had listened intently, for they did not understand much Polish, learned enough to know that Beatrice had gone to Plotzk. They hastily left the inn and went rapidly toward the forest. At the other end of the road they made careful inquiries and to their chagrin learned that neither sleigh nor carriage had passed on the road to Plotzk that day. Radzin was furious. He and his companions retraced their steps and met a Jewish pedlar on his way to Wysiniaski. Of him Radzin asked whether the Rosens were in the town.

"They have gone to Vlotzlavek," said the pedlar.

Radzin cut at him with his whip.

"Tell the truth, you dog," he cried.

"I am telling the truth, your mighty worship," was the trembling rejoinder.

He received another cut.

"Stop whining, you idiot. How long are they to stay away?" he asked raising his whip once more.

"Only one day; to-morrow they will be back. They will surely be back to-morrow!"

"Are you telling the truth?" cried Radzin threateningly.

"I am, I am, mighty lord, I am," the pedlar asseverated with fear and trembling.

Radzin took a handful of coins and threw it at the man, gave him a kick, and told him to go. The poor man gathered up the coins as fast as he could, at the same time casting furtive glances at his tormentor, and then ran. But the Count must have his extra joke at the Jew's expense, and taking one of the carbines he fired it into the air. The pedlar collapsed as if shot, amid shouts of laughter from Radzin and his men, who at length left him alone.

The Count did not at once report his ill success to the Baroness. He went back to Plotzk; and, two days later, mounted upon a fine horse he had bought on the strength of his prospective good fortune, he rode into the grounds of Castle Wysiniaski.

The Baroness received him without any particular show of enthusiasm. He had failed, that was all she knew, and all she cared to know. If she listened to his fairy stories of pursuits and escapes, it was only to torture herself. She wished to get keyed up to a state of temper that would rob her of the sense of responsibility. She despised this low Tartar whom she knew to be after her money, and, much as she hated Beatrice, she was glad that she had escaped and so she herself had no need to keep her word to Radzin, and she told him so.

"Ah, my little dove, you are mine with or without the conditions; the Jewess will not escape; but I must get one bird at a time," he said.

The Baroness shuddered at the thought that she would have to yield to him; yield to a man who confessedly did not love her and in her very presence was planning to secure "the other bird". If looks could have killed, the Count's career would have been cut short there and then.

"You may have better luck next time, and if not I may go to law and defeat her in the courts. I am in possession and she is not," she said.

"And I am in possession of you," he cried, taking her in his arms.

"Not quite," she said, trying to disengage herself.

"Yes you are, fully and irredeemably. I hold you and no power on earth can take you from me," he cried, crushing her to his breast, and kissing her lips, her eyes, her throat in the madness of his passion.

She ceased to struggle; a shudder ran through her body; she seemed as if hypnotized by his brute passion.

"You shall be mine—mine," he cried.

His words roused her, and with a quick movement she managed to free herself from his grasp.

"You pretend to love me honourably and would dishonour me," she said.

His eyes gleamed; he looked at her wolfishly.

"I want you; you are mine," he cried.

"Not yet, and I warn you against a second attempt," she said, moving so that a table came between them. "If I do not call the servants it is on your account, not on mine."

"Yield," he cried.

"Never—you will gain nothing by force," she said.

He was intelligent enough to see that he could never hope to get her money if he permitted his passion to master him.

"I was a fool, Baroness; I did wrong and beg you to forgive me. A saint would have fallen victim to your matchless charms. I pledge you my honour that I will do nothing more to offend you," he said.

If she was not deceived by his pretended contrition, she took care not to let him know it.

"I am glad that you have come to your senses," she said.

"Will you forgive me?" he asked.

"On one condition."

"Name it."

"That you return at once to Plotzk and that you will not call here until I send you word."

"You have named two conditions. I am willing to comply with the first but not with the second. You have promised yourself to me and I have a right to see you."

"Gentlemen do not insist on such rights; they look upon them as privileges which are always granted. But I want time to think, and in my

present state of mind I can think of nothing save the Jewess and her outrageous claim."

"I will answer for the Jewess, I swear to you; but I want my reward. The Jewess cannot escape me," he said.

The Baroness smiled. He had been stupid enough to tell her about the Jew whom he had maltreated on the road, so she knew that Rosen would be warned. The events of the past few moments also convinced her that it was infinitely better, if need be, to lose her estates to the Jewess, who was of her own blood, than be ruined by this monster who so flagrantly laid bare his purpose of getting possession of her wealth. There even came into her mind the possibility of an amicable arrangement with the Rosens; far better that, than to be associated with a Tartar who was an enemy of her people.

Radzin misconstrued her smile and thought that she was pleased by his promise to "answer for the Jewess". He, therefore, considered the broken bridge mended, his assault forgiven and forgotten. He was so certain that he was going to be the master at Castle Wysiniaski that he grew jovial.

"Well, sweetheart, if I must go into exile I shall go quickly so as to end it quickly; but before I go let me have a drink; it is bitter cold outside."

"Certainly; with pleasure," she said and rose.

"Do not trouble, I beg of you. The last time I was here I remember you regaled me with

Scotch whiskey which you kept in this cupboard," he said and turned toward a massive old cabinet.

A strange look came into the eyes of the Baroness.

In the right hand portion of the cabinet stood a number of bottles that contained finely distilled opiates which Baron Levanovski, a dilettante scientist, had prepared for experimentation, only to fall a victim to their dangerous power.

Radzin opened this cupboard and took out a bottle filled with a clear yellow liquid. He poured some of it into a glass, smelled it, and then tossed the liquid down his throat.

The Baroness uttered a cry.

Radzin looked at her and smiled.

"We Russians do not drink whiskey like women; but I must say this is pretty strong stuff."

The Baroness made no reply; she turned ghastly pale; fate was avenging the bitter shame to which the Russian had put her.

But the opiate appeared to have no effect on his iron constitution.

"I am obedient to your will and shall bid you good-bye," he said.

He walked up to her and before she could elude him he had her again in his arms.

"You will kiss me, sweetheart, before I go, will you not?

"No; leave me. You have promised; go," she said.

But the touch of her rekindled his passion.

"I shall not go; you are mine and you shall be wholly mine before I go."

"I hate you," she cried, struggling in vain to free herself.

"You do not hate me, only you want to be conquered and I shall conquer you. After that you will be mine forever."

His kisses burned her lips and made her senses swim. Her cries for help maddened him. He caught her up and carried her to the lounge.

"Joseph, help!"

The cry rang through the immense room. Her eyes were shut, her limbs trembled.

Suddenly she felt his hold relax and as she was thrown on to the lounge Radzin's body fell crashing against the screen and the plants that were between the lounge and the table.

She opened her eyes; one look at the prostrate form told her that she was safe.

In a moment she was up and having arranged her dress and hair she rang the bell.

"Call Matcheck," she commanded, and when the coachman had entered she said,

"Take the closed carriage and drive him to the inn. Let them take care of him and of his horse. When you get back arrange the high sleigh; I shall go to Plotzk and thence to Warsaw."

Matcheck took the big man like a sack of wheat upon his back and carried him out.

"I will go to Warsaw, but you shall not be warned," said the Baroness. "You who would rob me of all, you may die, we may both die. But if I see you, my Joseph, then I shall ask for nothing more on earth. To be near you, only to be near you!"

CHAPTER X.

A REVELATION.

Baroness Levanovska awoke unrefreshed, and although she had given positive orders for the journey to Warsaw, felt little inclination to travel. She was so wretched that she felt as if she could abandon herself to her fate.

Then the events of the past few days—nay, of the past few years—were marshaled before her mind's eye and she felt a new determination.

"I will not give up without a struggle," she said and rang for her maid.

When she was dressed, she opened the window and the crisp cold air rushing in revived and calmed her.

It was a beautiful winter morning, clear and bright, but bitterly cold. The frost glittered in the sunlight like millions of tiny points; the dry snow crackled under the tread of the servants. As she gazed at the scene whose contrast seemed to make it a fit setting to her own cruel fate, a sigh that was almost a sob escaped her. She closed the window. Suddenly her eye fell on the little book of Heine's poems. Her eyes lit as she took up the book, and as she opened it where a marker lay, the lines that met her sight seemed to stab her to the heart.

'Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab.'

"Ah, Joseph, when you read these lines to me I thought only of you and pity and love for you filled my heart. Now I know what it is to see one's wishes bloom and wither away. Be merciful, Father in heaven. I am a weak and sinful woman, but by his side I would be good. Hear my prayer, oh God, and let me see him again."

And as she thus prayed the agitation in her mind gradually calmed and her eyes softened.

"I am going to you, Joseph, I shall see you, I feel it," she whispered, her face radiant with love.

An hour later she was on her way to Plotzk. As soon as she reached there she sent a despatch to Rachel, and soon afterwards she and Rachel were in each other's arms.

"What a sweet surprise, Amanda," Rachel cried. "I hope you have come for a long stay."

"I cannot tell. It all depends on circumstances. How do you spend your time, Rachelka?"

"Since auntie's death, I am most of the time in the hospitals. If it were not that this activity gives me an opportunity of doing some good, I should long ago have retired to the convent," said Rachel.

"Oh, do not have such thoughts, Rachelka. You must stay in the world. It is a good world, and that reminds me that I am awfully hungry," the Baroness said with a laugh.

They were soon seated at table and after the meal the Baroness, being very tired, went to her room. The next morning, fresh from her toilet and elegantly dressed, she looked so beautiful that Rachel gazed at her in amazement.

"There is nobody like you in all the world, so beautiful, so beautiful," cried Rachel.

The Baroness kissed her on the mouth.

"You must not say such things or you will bewitch me," she said with a laugh.

Soon the steaming samovar was on the table and over their morning tea the friends conversed. Rachel's mood was rather sad, but the Baroness spoke bitterly and at times even defiantly.

"I have suffered; but God is gracious, my work compensates me for everything," said Rachel.

"For all?" cried Amanda. "There are sufferings which cannot be forgotten and for which nothing in the world can compensate."

"Do not say that, dear. I have suffered much, yet I have found peace in ministering to the wants of others. I think love and sorrow and suffering purify the soul," said Rachel.

"Suffering only makes me harder, more rebellious. Why should I suffer? Why should I be meek when nature has given me pride? Why should I forego my desires when I have

the means to gratify them and the taste to appreciate what is beautiful in the world?"

"Amanda, dear, you are speaking of earthly things."

"Anything else is not worth speaking of. People of our class have no time to think of other things. The saints are in heaven," said the Baroness, and shrugged her shoulders.

"There are some on earth too," said Rachel.

"Yourself, for example," the Baroness put in.

"No, I am a weak, sinful creature, and fate drove me to a line of work which I hated. I did not want to live in the world. The little work I did amongst the poor gave me no satisfaction, for when I went among them wearing the rich garments that my position forced on me, I felt that I made hearts envious and caused them to ask God why I should be rich and they poor. It was natural that I should long to wear a garb that would be a symbol of simplicity and resignation. But my aunt would not hear of it. Then, too, there was no system in my work and I found afterward but little satisfaction in it. One day I met a man, or rather an angel from heaven, and he taught me to work so as to gain peace and comfort——"

"And whom you love, of course; I am glad that you have come to your senses," said the Baroness.

"Amanda, you misunderstand me, because you do not know the circumstances," Rachel cried.

"What need is there for details? The quality

of the sentiment I can understand. I have gone through the same experience."

"You, too, my dear?" said Rachel, and put her arm around her friend's waist.

"And why not, pray? Only my love has left a sting, a painful sting," said the Baroness.

"We can not fathom the mysteries of life. Who can say why God sent this man to bless my life? What would this world be without such men? Although I have indeed suffered much, I have much to be thankful for. Once before, when I was in supreme distress, God sent me a saviour, and now I have found one who might be a counterpart of the other, were it not that this one is so wealthy and an infinitely finer man."

"And he reciprocates your feelings, of course?" asked the Baroness, who had turned very pale.

"He reciprocate!" cried Rachel, "why, he has never seen my face, as I am always veiled and have never spoken a word to him, although I have often been tempted to ask him if he has relatives in Dobrzyn."

The Baroness sprang up as if electrified and grasping Rachel's hand she cried,

"It is Joseph."

Rachel trembled violently.

"It is impossible," she said. "This man is the nephew of the famous Professor von Horovitz."

"It is he," cried Amanda. "He disappeared from Dobrzyn shortly after you had gone to Warsaw. I have hunted for him everywhere."

"You!" said Rachel, and there was such horror in her eyes that the other would have shrank back had she seen it; but the Baroness was too deeply moved to notice anything.

"Yes," she said, "this Joseph, in whom I became interested through you, saved my life and later my soul. And now I want to see him, Rachel, I must see him; he must help me; he is my world, my all, tell me where he is?"

Instead of replying, Rachel took Amanda's hand and led her to her own room, where, over the bed and facing the door, hung a large picture of a thorn-crowned Christ and by its side a lifelike portrait of Joseph Rosen.

At the sight of the pictures the Baroness stretched out her hands, her very soul going out toward the image of her beloved, and as she breathed his name she sank upon her knees.

"Poor Amanda, fate has been cruel to you—and—to me. Oh, it is bitter to love without hope. God pity us," she prayed.

"I do not want pity, I want love," cried the Baroness, springing to her feet. "Where is he? You have him. You love him. You have made his picture. Tell me where he is? Why should I be tortured? Let the Jewess have the estates, but why deny me this one request, Lord God in heaven? Joseph, my beloved, if you knew what I have suffered, you would surely pity me," she said, and there came a sweet tenderness into her voice.

"Poor Amanda, may God grant your wish," Rachel rejoined in all sincerity.

The Baroness embraced her.

"Forgive me, Rachelka. There is darkness in my soul; yours is filled with a holy light and gives you peace. But in my heart is a yearning that robs me of peace. Tell me where I can see him?"

"Where?"

Love, hope, despair, resignation sounded in that one word. Rachel was very pale but it was with the pallor of peace, of absolute self-denial. The Baroness felt keenly for her, but could find no words. At last she rose, and, folding her hands, stood before the image of Joseph as if in prayer.

"Oh, if I but knew what to do," she said, turning to Rachel. "Advise me, Rachelka, what am I to do."

"I do not know, dear, how to advise you, but my own future is plain. I will tell you frankly that I never loved him as you do. In him I only saw my master, my guide, one by whose example I desired to live and prepare my soul for the future. All this has come to an end now. It would be a sin for me to stay in the world. I should stand in your way. It might have been beautiful to bask in the sunshine of one so full of grace, but I shall find peace in prayer. To-morrow our paths separate. This is the closing scene of my life. May you be happy. But,

listen, you must listen: Joseph is destined for no woman."

Standing erect, her beautiful face pale and drawn with emotion, she seemed like a prophetess announcing the doom of an earthly existence. Her words sounded like a death knell to Amanda who, uttering a heart-rending cry, sank down upon the bed.

Rachel bent down and kissed her, and without a word, left the room.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE BRINK OF THE GRAVE.

For some time after Rachel had gone, the Baroness remained in the same position, her body shaken by fitful sobs. Then she raised her head and looked around the room in a bewildered manner. Suddenly her glance fell on the picture of Joseph, and she sat up. Her eyes cleared, her lips slightly parted, as she gazed at the features she so adored.

"Why did you come into my life?" she murmured. "I was happy until you came."

Suddenly her features clouded.

"But why did you come? Why? Why? You, you! Who are you, for whose sake I am so tortured? What are you? A Jew! One of those whom our nobles rule as they rule their serfs, their dogs! And you have revenged your low-born kind by casting a spell over me. I will break the spell. I will blot you out of existence," she cried, and springing from the bed she snatched a chair, leaped upon it, and tore the picture from the wall.

"I will crush you, I will shatter your image and my soul will be free," she cried, her eyes gleaming and her bosom heaving.

She raised the picture to dash it to the ground, when the fury of her wild emotion suddenly sub-

sided, her nervous tension relaxed, and the hand holding the picture sank down slowly.

"Oh, I cannot do it," she said. "I cannot desecrate your sweet image, my dear love," she murmured, pressing the picture to her breast. "Alas, heaven has abandoned me, or you would not turn from me; you would at least pity me. Forgive me, beloved. How could I be angry with you? How dared I raise my hand against you? I love you, I love you! I love you more than life. I loved you when you were poor and I love you now. I will come to you and you will have pity on me, my dear one," she said, looking with streaming eyes at the pictured face, whose eyes seemed to look back at her full of mercy and love, while the lips seemed to say, "Be patient, Amanda, I will not forsake you, for I pity all who are sad and sorrow laden; thy loving heart shall find its reward."

As she gazed at the likeness peace came back to her. She kissed the picture again and again.

"You are devoted to deeds of mercy; so shall I be. My fortune is great enough to help many who suffer and I shall spend it as you direct. Then you will take me to your heart even as I now take this dear image of your sweet self," she said, holding the picture to her bosom. After putting the picture back in its place, she sprang from the chair and arranging her disheveled hair, went to the sitting room.

Rachel, seated at her writing desk, looked up in surprise at Amanda's happy face. "She car-

ries lightly her burden of love and sorrow. Those that cry loudest do not always feel deepest," she said to herself.

"Are you better, dear?" she asked.

"I feel much better, thank you. I am going out," said the Baroness.

"If you can wait a few minutes, dear, I shall go with you. I am going to my banker and thence if you will to the hospital."

"It was my intention to go straight to the hospital," said the Baroness, "but I will go wherever you like."

"Thank you, dearest, I shall be ready in a few minutes," said Rachel.

Amanda walked up to her, and, putting her arms round her neck, asked.

"Is your resolve irrevocable?"

"Quite."

"Take time to consider, Rachelka dear; you can do a great deal of good without immuring yourself within convent walls."

"I could not live in the world and retain the grace of God; I am only a woman."

"Ah, poor dear, life puts hardships upon us, but then we ought to be strong enough to bear them and fight under the burden."

"I cannot fight, I have borne a heavy burden in the world, now I prefer to bear the burden of the Cross; and—Amanda, dear, I cannot serve two masters," Rachel said. "I have divided my fortune into two equal parts; one goes to the Church, and the other toward the building of a

home for unfortunate women. They need a home and protection when the heavy hand of fate is upon them and man despises them."

"You are a saint, Rachelka," said the Baroness, as she embraced her friend. "I cannot match my soul with yours. I am worldly; I want love, I want happiness, and I am going to fight for it."

"God grant that you be victorious," said Rachel, and they kissed each other.

They went out. From the bank they were driven to the city hospital. They walked through the various wards and both gave lavishly what help they could toward the comfort of the sick; but they themselves found but little comfort, for he whom they sought was not there either that day or the day following.

The Baroness was not distressed, however, for she knew that it was only a question of time.

On the third day, just as Rachel had ordered the carriage and while the Baroness was in her room getting ready to go out, the servant announced Count Radzin.

To Rachel the name implied nothing, and as she did not receive visitors, she told the maid to convey her regrets.

The maid soon reappeared and stated that the Count desired to see the Baroness Levanovska.

"Bid the Count enter and inform the Baroness," said Rachel, and left the room.

"Ask the Count's name," said the Baroness, surprised that any one should call on her in Warsaw when she had so far maintained a strict in-

cognito. Before she could get a reply the door opened and Count Radzin stood in the entrance.

Consternation and disgust overcame her. The color in her face came and went. Involuntarily she put her hand to her heart.

"Will you not be seated, *chère Baronne?*" he asked.

"Who showed you in here?" she cried.

"A discreet maid who was not averse to accepting five roubles to show me the way to the woman who is soon to be my wife," he said with a leer.

The Baroness did not seem to hear the remark. At length she mastered herself sufficiently to cope with the new situation.

"Let us go into the reception room," she said.

"I prefer to stay here, we shall remain undisturbed," he rejoined.

"What do you wish?"

"Will you not be seated, *chère Baronne?*" he said.

The Baroness sat down: she was as one in a dream.

"I might not have found you had I not visited a sick soldier in the hospital and got a glimpse of you through the window as you entered the carriage with your friend," he said.

"I am glad that you succeeded in finding me; now will you be good enough to tell me what you want of me?" she said.

"I have come to tell you that I have carried out my part of our compact and would ask you,

chère Baronne, to carry out yours," he answered.

"I have not the least idea what you mean," she said, lightly.

"No? Then you do not remember suggesting the abduction of the Jewess?" he said.

"Your threats have no effect on me, sir. If you have carried off the Jewess, keep her," said the Baroness.

This bold move on her part staggered him considerably. But he was a Russian. He had not come to parley, but to punish her. She had insulted him. She had caused him to be laughed at by her servants who, he knew, had carried him to the inn. He had not slept for twenty-four hours, as the Baroness thought he would, but a little over sixteen hours. When he awoke and found himself in the inn, he crossed himself, thinking he was in a dream. But the smell of sauerkraut and the loud talk of the inn keeper left no doubt in his mind that he was awake and that he was in the filthy inn and on the filthy peasant bed. He sprang up and taking an old chair sent it crashing through the window.

The inn keeper rushed out, saw the damage, and went toward the room where the Count was.

"Come in here, you rogue," cried the Count.

"I am your lordship's servant and will cut off my head for your lordship if it can be of service." said the trembling inn keeper.

"You shall tell me the truth and nothing will happen to you; but remember, you rogue, the truth," said the Count.

"As I love the blood of Christ, I will tell the truth, my lord, only ask, my lord."

"How did I come here?"

"You were brought here in a carriage by Matcheck and the young lackey Grizek, who waits on her ladyship the Baroness Levanovska."

"At what hour?"

"Near sundown, my lord."

"And my horse?"

"Is in my stable, warm and well fed. I attended to him like a baby."

"It is well; brush him down, saddle him and bring him around," he said, giving the inn keeper a handful of coins.

A few minutes later he was riding at breakneck speed toward Wysiniaski, and arrived there only to learn that the Baroness had that morning gone to Warsaw.

He turned at once and rode to Plotzk. Having asked the Governor for permission to go to Warsaw, he set out at once with his two Tartars and they, keener than bloodhounds, reported to him within two hours of his arrival that the Baroness was not in any of the hotels.

It was by the merest accident that he had seen the Baroness. One of his Tartars having got into a brawl with some labourers, was badly cut and taken to the hospital, and he had gone to see him. But for the fact that he was in the operating room, he and the Baroness might have met face to face in the hospital.

The bold stand she took with him now shook

his resolve for a moment. When he left Plotzk he had made up his mind what to do and it was not his intention to deviate from this plan.

"I did not come here to threaten you, I came to punish you," he said slowly.

"Ha, ha, ha," she laughed, "and I suppose you have your little punishment ready to mete out. May I know what form your wrath will take?"

"We shall first get married before a magistrate, then we shall see; I may flog you or I may have you sent to Siberia," he said, looking at her with his deep, black eyes in a manner that made her believe he would do it if he could. But she was not afraid of this Tartar; her family was powerful, and she could defy him.

"Is that all, your lordship?" she asked.

"Perhaps not; first you shall amuse me," he replied.

"Enough, sir," cried the Baroness. "You shall answer for this to the Count de Lack, who will have you chastised as you deserve. Now leave me."

"And shall I go back to the inn where you had me taken after you drugged me?" he asked.

"You must be dreaming! I drugged you? That is another fairy tale like that of the abduction of the Jewess, who is in Warsaw," she said.

"Then you knew that she was here and you concocted a scheme to fool me and then drugged me to complete your work. Confess that you

drugged me," he cried, springing at her and putting his heavy hand on her shoulder.

For a moment she was too much startled to speak, then she made a quick movement and freeing herself from his grasp, seized the bell rope.

"Leave the room instantly or I will call the servants," she said.

"Your servants would be cut down by my Tartars who are in the hall and only await my signal," he said.

This bow drawn at a venture was successful in frightening her. She trembled at the thought of bringing ruin upon Rachel, for she knew what these wolves were who for years had their fangs in the flesh of the Poles and to whom nothing was sacred.

"What do you want of me?" she asked, unable to keep the tears from her eyes now that she was at the mercy of this savage.

"I want you to go through the mock ceremony of a marriage so that I can have your fortune and revenge myself on you," he said grinning savagely.

"Will nothing buy me my freedom?"

"Nothing."

"Then give me time to think, at least."

"Not a minute; you must decide now."

She raised her eyes and as she glanced through the window saw Rachel stepping into her carriage. Her expression changed.

"I have decided," she said.

"How?" he asked.

"That I would rather die than be the wife of a Russian brute. The servants may take care of themselves, but I will call them," she said, and gave a strong pull at the bell.

"Then die!" he cried, and quick as a flash drew a revolver and fired at her.

She uttered a cry and fell. As she fell he fired another shot at her, and then put the pistol to his own forehead and fired.

The shots brought all the servants to the room, and the shrieks of Anna, the Baroness' maid, caused a crowd of people to gather in front of the house. Soon the police made their way to the room, and one of the officers examined the contents of the Count's pockets to ascertain the identity of the man, who was quite dead.

Meanwhile Rachel, to whom the servants had carried the news of the tragedy, summoned doctors, and simultaneously with their arrival came a military escort; the dead Count was taken away, and the chief officer took down an ante-mortem statement of the Baroness, who was still conscious.

Only one shot had taken effect, but the bullet had passed through her body and was found imbedded in the wall. The doctors made a careful examination and decided that she had but a short time to live as they feared internal hemorrhage. At the suggestion that a priest should

be sent for to administer the last sacrament, the Baroness shook her head.

"Do you not desire it?" asked Rachel, her eyes streaming with tears.

"Call him," she breathed.

"I will at once, dearest," Rachel replied, and bespeaking the utmost care for her stricken friend, she left the room and soon the house.

She did not know whither to direct her steps. For a moment she thought of going to the Professor's house; then she remembered that Joseph might be at the city hospital, so she went there. On her way she recalled what Amanda had said about Joseph Rosen's disappearance from Dobrzyn and her conviction that this Joseph and the other were identical. But why should he change his name? How did he come to be so wealthy? She was sadly perplexed when suddenly she heard a voice say:

"I beg your pardon, Rachel, is it really you?"

She looked up and before her stood Joseph, whose voice convinced her beyond a doubt that it was Joseph Rosen.

"Thank God! I was on my way to find you and to beg you to come and see my friend, the Baroness Levanovska, who was to-day shot and mortally wounded."

Joseph started; the awful news terrified him.

"The Baroness here and mortally wounded? How did it happen?" he asked.

"She was shot by a Count Radzin, who, so the servant told me, has been a persistent suitor

of hers. But she did not love him and came to Warsaw to—to—well, she loved another. I learned it by accident and at the same time I learned of your identity. I did not know that you were the same Joseph that I used to know."

"I am the same. Are you, Rachel?" he asked, looking at her with eyes that were full of kindness.

"I have tried to be as good as a weak human being can be in the sight of God."

"I have never seen you among those I serve on the lower Nalevki and on the farther side of the Vistula, but then you may have your own circle where you work," he said kindly.

"You have seen me often, as I have seen you; perhaps you would not have recognized me today had I been veiled as usual," she said, her face flushing a deep red.

"Ah, then you are the veiled lady! God bless you. It is well. But the Baroness? You have, of course, good surgeons. What good can I do? She needs the priest now and absolute quiet," he said.

"She loves you, Joseph, she loves you; come and ease her last moments."

Rachel's words amazed him. The Baroness loved him and had told Rachel. Then that scene at the Castle was not a momentary caprice, and she had nursed this love for many years, and he who had been scorched as by a blast, had tried to live down this pain and this longing, had never even thought of the possibility that she remem-

bered him. And when he had reached a station in life that made him almost her equal he still forebore. He considered himself an emancipated slave, that was all. Now that she was dying a voice said to him, "she loves you". She was not ashamed to love him. It seemed hard and cruel, and for a moment his soul rebelled. Then he mastered himself and, putting his hand on Rachel's arm, said,

"Come, God will be merciful."

The doctors who were in the room when Joseph entered saluted him cordially.

"How is the patient?" he asked.

"The end is near; nothing can be done," one of them replied.

"I crave your pardon, gentlemen, when the end is only near and has not come something may always be done,—even a miracle," he said, and went into the sick room.

Unable to speak, Joseph looked at the Baroness with his great tender eyes. She understood him as completely as if he had spoken.

"Joseph, beloved, do not let me die; not now, not now; save me." Her accents were scarcely audible, but he heard them as clearly as if every word were a stroke of a great bell.

He bent down to kiss her hand, but before he could say a word she, with a supreme effort, threw her arms around his neck and their lips met.

As Joseph raised himself great tears fell from his eyes. His face flushed, and falling on one

knee he kissed her hand again and again. Then he rose and, putting her hand on the bed, said,

"Be brave, my friend, and patient. God will not forsake you."

"Do not permit them to give me the sacrament; I shall die if they do. Oh, save me, beloved, save me," she breathed. "I do not want to die."

"You will not die," he said.

At this the nurses shook their heads, for they knew there was no hope.

Joseph begged Rachel to call in the doctors and suggested to them an operation. They looked amazed. But he repeated his suggestion; the injury being intestinal he thought an operation would save her life.

"We thought of that, but decided that it was impossible; we feared she would not survive the shock," said one of the surgeons.

"She will survive the shock, gentlemen; fear nothing," said Joseph.

The earnestness of his words impressed the doctors. They held a whispered consultation. At length they agreed to operate on the patient and forthwith proceeded to make the necessary arrangements. The Baroness, who still held Joseph's hand, begged him to stay and not forsake her. He felt sorely tried for he had not the heart to witness the operation. Bending down he whispered,

"Be brave, my friend, I shall pray for you and God will be merciful."

"God bless you," she breathed with a happy

smile. A few minutes later she was under the influence of the anæsthetic and under the knife of the surgeon.

For weeks afterwards her life hung on a very slender thread; constant care, however, worked the miracle that had seemed necessary for her recovery. After three months she was able to sit up for a few moments at a time.

About the middle of April it was evident that she would get quite well, provided, so the doctors said, she would go to Switzerland or to the south of France. But she would not hear of it, despite the fact that she had received official notice that Beatrice Rosen, titular Countess da Paula had relinquished her claims to the estates left her by her grandfather, the Count de Pauli. She refused at first to leave the city where Joseph lived.

But if she rebelled against the commands of the physicians, she yielded to the arguments of Rachel and to the least word uttered by Joseph.

"You once told me, Amanda," said Rachel, "that one must be strong to work, and I was trying to run away from myself then; now you are entering a new life in which you wish to keep up the battle for your love. It is certainly necessary that you should get strong."

"Do you think he will ever love me?" sighed the Baroness.

"I cannot tell; but his delicacy of manner is so rare that he must have the kindest feelings for you. During your illness he sent the choicest

flowers; not a day passed that he did not come and inquire, often twice a day. I know that it is his earnest wish that you should go to Switzerland," said Rachel.

"Will you go with me?" asked the Baroness.

"My dear Amanda, my days in the outer world are numbered. As soon as you leave I shall take the veil," said Rachel.

"Does he know it?"

"He does, and though he does not quite approve of it, he does not forbid," said Rachel.

That afternoon came a note from Joseph, also a letter from the de Lacks, inviting Amanda to go with them to Switzerland.

"My Dear Friend (Joseph wrote),

"I cannot leave Warsaw without a word to you regarding your health, which is precious to me. I firmly believe that you ought to go to a more congenial climate than ours. Go to the pure air of Switzerland, as the doctors suggest. I am going to Bialestock, where an epidemic of cholera has broken out. I desire to study the subject carefully and prepare myself for an emergency. I cannot tell how long I shall stay in the infected district. Meanwhile I beg of you to leave Poland at once. I hope to see you in the near future and to find you strong in body and in soul. That God's blessing may go with you is the earnest wish of

Joseph Rosen-Horovitz."

Amanda pressed the note to her heart, and kissed it again and again.

"I shall do your bidding, Joseph. It may be that God will have mercy on my poor heart," she said.

At the end of the month the Baroness joined the Count and Countess de Lack at the city of Thorn, whence they started for Switzerland. A few days later Rachel took the veil and entered the convent of the Carmelites.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

"Es ziehen die brausenden Wellen
Wohl nach dem Strand;
Sie schwellen und zerschellen
Wohl auf dem Sand."

(Heine.)

"See, my love, the stars are beaming
Passion's fire in ev'ry ray
And each star is fondly dreaming
Of a star-love far away."

(Danziger.)

BOOK THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

JEAN MERAU, ARTIST.

Professor Daniel von Horovitz was reading the "Daily Courier" when a loud voice suddenly disturbed him. He knew the voice and the person, and he loved both.

"Dear Jean," he murmured, "obstreperous as ever."

Meanwhile this "dear Jean" continued to explode and rage at the supposed culpability of Vladislav, the Professor's body servant, who evidently knew his man, for he grinned and answered with a semi-submissive "Yes, sir".

"Ye gods, what does this mean, Vladislav, to leave your master indoors when he ought to be in the Lazienki Park?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will cut off your ears if it happens again."

"Yes, sir."

"Here, take off my overcoat."

"Yes, sir."

"Now can't you get me off with my coat faster than that, or shall I help you?"

"Yes, sir—no, sir."

"See here, I will skin you alive," he cried, and both laughed.

"I beg your lordship's pardon," said Vladislav and took off the guest's overshoes, but too slowly, apparently, for that person's patience, for he again gave vent to a loud and voluble protest.

The Professor laid down his paper, went to the door and threw it wide open.

"Well, Jean, I am glad to see you," he said.

"Glad to see Jean Merau, are you? And I suppose you want Jean Merau to believe it," he cried, grasping the Professor's hand. "Your little Jean is an infidel in these matters. If you were glad to see him you would not hide yourself like a beaver in his hole and lie low until little Jean came to smoke you out."

"Take a cigar, that will calm your temper and then we shall see," said the Professor.

"The devil take it, but I know you, papa Daniel; if I sit down and smoke one of your weeds, which, by the gods, are not half bad, I shall be a prisoner here the rest of the forenoon and then—good-bye sunshine, good-bye flowers and beauty for the rest of this fine day," he said, taking the proffered cigar and throwing his gigantic body into a large arm-chair.

"I can promise you that we shall go out or rather drive out, for as you have seen fit to put on overshoes it is apparently not good walking," said the Professor.

"It is beastly walking. The month of May means the transition period of the heaven-given snow into unpoetic mud; but the sun is fine and the Lazienki has a few spots fit for human beings

to breathe in, to see and to be seen," said Merau.

"I see by *LE MATIN* that your picture got the prize in the Salon," said the Professor.

"I do not feel very proud of that prize. What is a landscape? Nothing! What is a tower? Nothing! An honest man does not value a prize if he thinks his work does not deserve it."

"Why, little Jean, I am surprised to hear you talk that way. If I remember correctly you were very enthusiastic about this particular picture," the Professor remarked.

"Stuff! I was a fool. I was enthusiastic because there was a woman in the case. I wanted to please her; she was a pretty creature that heated my fancy and made the months I spent in the little town pleasant. She tortured me with her love and her jealousies, and her husband tortured me with his jealousy and his bad food, for he was *chef* and hotelier in one; still I did some fine sketching."

"And did not the hotelier make an attempt to poison you?" asked the Professor. "It would have given color to the romance," he added.

"He tried hard enough to poison me with pretty bad wine, but I managed to have the madame lead the way to the old cellar, and there, ye gods, what wine worshippers these French are! The bottles reposed in their dusty little coffins like antediluvian babies. Well, I managed to counteract the poison, but in lucid moments I was thoroughly dissatisfied with my work. I wanted a human being for my canvas and tried

to paint several of the people with whom I came in daily contact. But there was not a mother's son of them that could inspire one's art. What else could I do but make love to my landlady or to a pretty seamstress, and devote the balance of my time to the painting of dead things?"

"The gods were at least gracious to you in matters of love, and that is a gain in this cold and prosaic world," said the Professor with a smile. "But confess, little Jean, this is a fortune or misfortune which one like you might bear with equanimity, so long as he could turn out work such as you have turned out in that tower picture."

"Hush, Daniel, do not remind me of that picture. I tell you I was never satisfied with it, and on the day it was finished I drank two bottles of Vouvray, a bottle of Vermouth, and together with the *petit justice* (as they called my drinking companion), we emptied several bottles of good rich Burgundy and a quantity of champagne. I remember the incident clearly because I took offense at something or other, and then let fly at the hotelier and everybody in general, so that I had a good sized bill to pay, and all on account of that damned landscape," said Merau, puffing away at his cigar.

"Was it really the landscape or was it the woman?" asked the Professor.

"Perhaps it was the woman. But I did not come here to talk all this nonsense."

"Well, what is it? Speak out, little Jean."

"I came to tell you that my life is a failure," said the artist.

"Take another cigar, little Jean. I hope you don't let matters of finance trouble you. You may sign my cheque any time you desire."

"The devil take your cheque, Daniel; I have more money than I can hope to spend; but I am a failure as an artist."

The Professor rose and felt his friend's pulse, then he looked him in the eyes.

"No, it is not that," he said. "Stick out your tongue, little Jean, maybe your stomach is out of order."

"Do not be hocus-pocussing about my digestion; it is all right. And what I said is the truth," said the artist earnestly.

"Then what is it, Jean? Out with it. If you cannot talk plainly to your best friend, leave me to my papers and go to the Lazienki," the Professor said curtly; but there was a gleam in his eyes that told how he loved the giant and wanted to help him.

"Well, Daniel, I want to paint Joseph as the Christ. It has become a passion with me and I wish your help," the artist pleaded.

"My dear Jean, you have touched a subject that is beyond me. I cannot help you, for I have not the heart to request anything that might be repugnant to him."

"I know; I am just as big a coward. I asked him once and he looked at me, and I never asked again. Where is he now?"

"I hope he is asleep. He arrived this morning from Bialestock, where he spent two weeks among the cholera-stricken people."

"Let me have a peep at him, Daniel," cried Merau, springing to his feet.

But the Professor looked so aghast at the suggestion that Merau sat down subdued.

"I beg your pardon, Daniel, it was only an impulse. But promise me that you will make no objection if he gives me permission to make a sketch of him."

"Brother Jean, you ought not to exact such a promise from me; you know that I would do much to help you in your art; but I will not deceive him whom I honour as I honour no one on earth. I have never forgiven myself for letting my vanity run away with me as it did when I adopted him and let him matriculate at the university under the name of Horovitz. He hates falsehood. My sister tells me that from the day he began to speak he has filled her heart with gladness and her soul with awe; and if you could see how gentle he is with her! It is beautiful."

"Are you speaking of Joseph?" said Mrs. Rosen, who had come into the room.

"Yes, sister."

Merau sprang up and kissed the woman's hand.

"I beg to salute you," he said.

"How are you, Mr. Merau?" she asked.

"As bad as ever, except when I am asking after your dear son," he said.

"He has but this moment left the house and asked me to make his excuses to you, Daniel. He has not seen his poor people for two weeks and is anxious to know how they are getting on."

When Mrs. Rosen had gone the friends looked at each other in silence, then the Professor said almost gaily:

"Come, little Jean, we may meet him somewhere."

CHAPTER II.

THE INNER VOICE.

Professor Horovitz and his friend drove to the Lazienki Park. Nature was like a beautiful maiden, awakened smiling from a long sleep.

"Look at this, you sinner, and tell me if the picture is not worthy the best efforts of your brush," said the Professor.

"I do not deny it; but the knowledge that all this beauty must pass away, that it is born with the germ of death in it, saddens me and does not inspire my soul. I want the redeeming feature, the life promising life," the artist replied.

"And does not nature promise a reawakening even at the moment when it is sepulchred in snow and ice?" asked the Professor.

"So it does; but so do the rags gathered by the ragman promise that some day we shall write our sweetest or bitterest sentiments on the paper that the rags yield," said the artist.

"Not badly put," the Professor remarked.

"Only I don't care to be reminded of the rags when I am using the white sheet of paper," Merau continued, "and I am always being reminded of it. A life such as I desire to put on canvas would always recall the beautiful life that it portrayed; man would see it and love it."

"Vanity, thy name is Little Jean. But come,

let us get out. Send the carriage home and let us go into the Saxon Gardens," said the Professor.

"Agreed," cried Merau, and when the carriage had stopped he jumped out nimbly and assisted his friend to alight.

They had walked in silence for some minutes, when Merau grabbed the Professor's arm.

"There he is. Look at him. By St. George, he is the only typical Christ living!" he cried.

Both stood still and watched Joseph who, book in hand, was coming toward them. Frequently he stopped to read, then he would continue on his way. Suddenly he stopped, looked up to the sky, gazed into the distance and extended one arm as if he were going to address some one. The pose, though unconsciously artistic, was too much for Merau.

"Daniel," he cried, "I am going to ask him point blank to sit for me." And taking the Professor's arm they went quickly up to Joseph.

As soon as he saw them a glad look came into his eyes.

"How are you, gentlemen?" he cried.

"Reading when walking is an invitation to myopia," said the Professor.

"I have made a discovery which is the safest cure against it," Joseph replied.

"And that is——?" asked the Professor.

"This," said Joseph, holding out a copy of the New Testament.

"Bah! it may be a discovery for you, since you never read it; but for us it is *ein ueberwundener*

Standpunkt. We are neither for it nor against it. We manage to live on in culpable indifference, and if at times we feel the need of some such reading, our predilection is for Voltaire," said the Professor.

"Voltaire was a thief and an habitual liar," cried Joseph.

"Poets and merchants are addicted to the same habits; if the former lie for pleasure and the latter for gain, why should not the philosopher practice the golden mean and take a bit of both?" the Professor replied, and putting his hand on Joseph's shoulder, added, "Well, after all, you might spend your time and money on far worse things."

"I did not spend a grosh on this; but I do not subscribe to your idea that Voltaire is preferable to the Christ story," Joseph responded.

"That is not quite my idea," said the Professor; "what I really intended to say is that I prefer the strong intellectuality of the Frenchman to the weak sentimentality of the Galilean."

"You call the censor of the Sadducean priesthood in Jerusalem weak? The man who lashed the Pharisees, weak!" cried Joseph, and his form appeared to grow as he spoke. "I cannot imagine a stronger personality; the cynicism of Voltaire pales by the side of this wonderful man of old."

Merau listened to Joseph as if magnetised. At length he roused himself.

"Are you, then, a Christian?" he asked.

"I!" cried Joseph. "Why should I be a Christian? What is a Christian? You do not, I suppose, mean the people who go to the fine churches in the city of Warsaw, who bow before the cross and then live only for frivolity? Or do you mean those that ride in gilded carriages, wear fine clothes and splendid jewels, are surrounded by troops of servants and live in luxury? Or do you mean the poor wretches who get drunk, beat their wives, and pull the beards of the poor Jew pedlars? No, I am not a Christian."

The Professor felt something like awe before the majesty of Joseph's speech; Merau looked at him open-mouthed, he could not grasp the power that lay in this bolt of accusation that had been so calmly hurled.

The Professor was the first to regain his habitually calm and sarcastic manner.

"You are a quick reader, Joseph, and you readily absorb the thoughts that are presented to you; but, believe me, the Christ story is neither new nor interesting, and above all it does not aid the digestion," he said.

"Stuff!" cried Merau; "I wish he would read this story daily for an hour in my studio."

"I will do so if it will please you," Joseph replied.

Merau threw his arms around Joseph's neck and kissed him on the cheek.

"Come now," he cried. "I want to catch your expression."

As they walked on, a band of little bareheaded urchins in tattered clothes turned somersaults and played all sorts of antics in front of them to get a few pennies.

Joseph gave them some coppers.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," quoted Merau, looking at Joseph with sparkling eyes. Taking a handful of coins from his pocket, he threw them amongst the little ones, who scrambled for their prize.

Merau was beside himself with joy. He could scarcely believe in his good fortune, and he was not happy until Joseph was in his studio. A prominent object in the studio was an easel on which stood a large picture covered with a cloth. Merau took off the cloth and displayed the portrait of a woman.

Joseph uttered a cry of surprise.

"Whose portrait is that?" asked the Professor.

"A relative of the Epsteins," said Merau.

Joseph turned quickly.

"A relative of the Epsteins!" he cried. "Why, this is——"

"An American girl," said Merau, who had not noticed the bearing of Joseph's exclamation, and continued to prepare a canvas for his work.

Joseph stood before the picture in an attitude of adoration. The wonderful likeness of the features to those he carried in his soul—the strange coincidence that brought these features before him so real, so vivid, so speaking, that it

seemed as if the lips would move and address him as they once did with soul-stirring passion—all this appeared to him like the mysterious working of Providence.

He was fighting against the devouring passion that consumed him. He was battling with himself as he had battled when Amanda told him she was willing to proclaim her love for him before all the world, and that she would die if he forced her to go away from him.

"I love you," she said, "and when a woman loves she is braver than a man. I defy the world; I never cared much for my family; you are all the world to me."

But he said, "You must go, and if it be God's will, you shall reap a reward. When the time comes, you will be by my side, but now you must go."

He had then irrevocably decided to engage in the great work among the sick and poor of Warsaw. He had seen the futility of a life of love such as Providence or circumstances offered him. He could not marry a Christian woman and live a life of strife and protest against all the world. The story of love and suffering, as he had heard it from the mouth of his uncle, was always in his memory. The days he had spent among the cholera-stricken people of Bialestock strengthened his resolve to forego the personal happiness that a union with Amanda promised. He was unlike other men. The desire of self-abnegation grew in proportion as the charm of worldly hap-

piness was offered him, and once he had persuaded Amanda to go abroad, temptation was practically removed. He was tranquil, and in a measure happy.

Now suddenly a vision of the adorable face had appeared before his eyes, and, as he gazed upon it, tears dimmed his sight. He had never before been really conscious that he was in the grip of a strange and marvelous power. What was it? He was bewildered. He wanted to analyze his feelings, to get a clear, comprehensive view of his own condition and of the force that held him. A voice seemed to call to him from his inner consciousness.

"You are helpless before the force you have encountered; you neither can conquer nor evade it; analysis of your motives is futile."

"But who are you that would put yourself between me and the work to which I desire to devote my life?" he mutely asked.

And the voice answered: "I am as a pebble on the shore of life. . . Cast upon the placid waters I turn into a ripple and expand over their entire surface. . . I am the water that laps the distant shore. . . I am the universe wherein the earth revolves. . . I am the force that holds the constellations together. . . I am the fire of the sun. . . I am the light of day. . . I am the darkness of night. . . I am the calm and the storm. . . I am the east and the west, the north and the south. . . I am above and below. . . I am the pivot of the world.

"I am the glory of nations, the ambition of man. . . I am the spirit of courage and the fear of the coward. . . I am the wisdom of the sage and the folly of the thoughtless. . .

"I am the fancy of the poet, the vision of the dreamer, the smile of the tender, the force of the brutal, the sweetness of the gentle.

"I am good and evil, joy and sorrow, hope and despair, sin and saintliness. . .

"I am the aspiration of the living, the regret of the dying . . . the tranquillity of the saint, the unrest of the sinner . . . the prodigality of the spendthrift and the greed of the miser. . .

"I am the chilled steel of the mind and the molten lead of the heart. . . I am kindness and cruelty. . . I am relentless and yielding. . . I am compassionate and cold. . . I am the head and the heart, the leaping blood and the brilliant tear. . . I am the power that moves all beings, that prompts every action, that penetrates the deepest deep of all that lives. . . I was in the beginning; I was through æons of time; I shall be forever. . .

"I play with creatures at my pleasure. . .

"I humble the proud, raise the lowly, and beatify the fallen. . . I make the cruel tender and the tender cruel, the strong weak and the weak strong. . . I make the simple-minded wise and the wise foolish. . .

"I am the power that multiplies all creatures. . . . I am the source and cause of all life. . .

"I am the essence of thought, the soul of desire. . .

"King and peasant, philosopher and priest, all are my slaves, and all that lives is in my service. . . . Without me nothing can exist; I am the bond that holds humanity together, and while man lives he cannot escape from me, who am his essence and the only power by which all things exist in time and in space. . . Even though he die, he escapes me not, for he but serves to propagate existences that are subject to the eternal law, the law of which I am the beginning and the end. . .

"I slumber not, nor do I sleep, and at the given hour and at the appointed place I call forth commands that must be obeyed. . .

"And whatever man does for himself or for others it is ever done at my behest. . . His worship or his jeers, his desires or his denials, his greed or his gifts, his war or his peace, his joy or his sorrow, his smiles or his frowns, his tears or his laughter, all, all comes from me. . . "

Joseph was terrified at the resistless surge of his thoughts. "And must I pass through the same gate of experience as others?"

"You have passed the gates long ago—at the time when you read the poet's passion to the sad-hearted woman who once pleaded with you for my sake."

A tremor ran through Joseph's body; then he braced himself.

"I shall conquer," he said to himself.

"We shall see," the voice replied, and soon Joseph's vision cleared . . . he was ready for the fight.

Merau, who knew nothing of what was going on in Joseph's mind, perceived only the outward effect, which suited his artistic fancy. It was this very expression that he desired; it inspired him, and he worked with a fervor that reddened his great, round face and till drops of perspiration fell on to his palette.

At length Joseph's eyes, so human and yet so divine, looked from the canvas, and then the master stopped.

"I thank you," he said, laying down the palette and brush.

The Professor looked at Merau's work with undisguised admiration.

"There is something, after all, in that fancy of yours, Jean; or is it the Christ story?" he said.

"No, it is the woman," whispered the artist.

The Professor glanced at Joseph, who was looking at some of Merau's paintings.

"Let us hope that you are right," he said in an undertone. Aloud, he added: "I cannot see what the world admires in the person of Christ. Men as noble as He lived before Him and after Him; some were tortured and killed. A sad face is not necessarily an object of admiration."

"I am an artist and admire whatever appears to me to be beautiful. What do you think of it, Joseph?" cried Merau.

"I?" said Joseph, and he passed his hand over his eyes; "I do not know, but I should think that the God-like in mankind is the most appealing thing there is, and touches our souls most nearly."

"Ideals," murmured the Professor.

"And unattainable," suggested Merau.

"All the more reason why we ought to strive after them," said Joseph, looking at one of the landscapes that represented the source of the Vistula.

"The attempt is more than foolish—it is criminal," the Professor rather warmly rejoined.

"That may be true of earthly efforts directed by motives of mere selfishness, but it cannot be true of our duty to humanity, which is the noblest attempt at the realization of an ideal. What is our mercy other than an attempt to imitate the Being whom we call All-Merciful, and what is human love, human fellowship, but an effort to live up to a divine ideal?"

"Hitch your wagon to a star, as the American philosopher Emerson puts it," said Merau.

"We need not go to America, Pan Jean, for a proof of my assertion. Think how beautifully Lessing puts it, 'If God, the Father, held Truth in His right hand and in His left hand He held but the Desire for Truth, and he spake to me, 'Son, choose!' I would humbly sink at His feet and say, 'Father, give me the Desire for the Truth, since Truth herself is for Thee alone.' What, then, is left to mortal man other than the

striving, the effort, the attempt to do as much as we can for those who suffer?" cried Joseph, his face flushing.

"Look to your laurels, Daniel," said Merau; "Joseph's idealism is more rational than your materialism."

"His inexperience is great; his enthusiasm has the lambency of youth untried in the furnace of passion; he is unselfish because he has not been asked to deny himself a strong desire of the heart," said the Professor.

Joseph turned pale. His uncle's words cut him like a knife; he felt a pain at his heart. How could he tell them of the battle he had waged, that his very unselfishness was begotten by his love, that every act of his life now was like a spark from the wonderful passion that burned in his soul?

And as he looked upon the picture of the girl who bore so marvelous a resemblance to Amanda, he asked himself again and again if it might not be better to tell them all and to throw self-denial to the winds.

But something within him, something which had guided his life ere the spirit of love had spoken, something equally potent and over which he had no control, told him to keep silence. As soon as he saw his duty clearly, he grew calmer; he saw that he must at all costs gain strength to resist under all conditions and circumstances. A kind of cynicism came over him; he, who fought against love's power, would ex-

plain its meaning; he felt the desire to play upon his own heartstrings, and a chance remark of the painter's gave him opportunity.

"I do not believe that love necessarily begets selfishness," said Merau.

"It does not, Pan Jean," said Joseph. "Love is a bell made vibrant by contact with a foreordained personality; it is the light that gladdens the seeing eye, the power that sustains the responsive heart and sentient soul; it is the infinitesimal seed that in time grows to a beautiful pearl; it feeds on life, and in its turn gives infinite pleasure; it loses itself in its own being, and becomes a great active force. Love is the law of God, and by that law man must seek his own and other people's happiness; for man was made for happiness, not for grief; for smiles, not for tears; and both grief and tears are incidental, only incidental."

He spoke rapidly, and with each word pierced his own heart till it bled. Sighing deeply, he turned to his spellbound listeners, and added:

"Still, to reach the highest, love must not yield to the sweets of life; it must devote its being to comfort those in misery."

"As Christ did?" asked Merau.

"As all great souls did," said Joseph.

"And give away all one has to the poor?" the Professor asked, with a sneer.

"As much as one can conscientiously give without impoverishing himself and leaving his dear ones destitute. Love, the great law of God,

should make a man thus unselfish, it seems to me," said Joseph.

"By St. George," cried Merau, "both ideas are excellent. A man who is wedded to gold and lacks the sentiments essential to noble living, or to an appreciation of the beautiful, is fit only for the dogs—and even they would turn tail and scurry away from his flesh, for it would have a metallic taste. But the idea that love is the law of God and has nothing to do with animal passion, strikes me as fine. Love is the poetry of life. Here you have a block of marble; there the finished figure. Here a piece of canvas and a pot of paint—there the speaking image. Yes, it is love that does it," cried Merau.

"Dreams, dreams," said the Professor. "If love be the law of God, then He ought to care for those eager to obey His law. There was none more eager to obey that law than I. Yet think of the sepulchre that holds all that this dreamer calls the law of God."

"That does not prove that the law of God is wrong; it merely proves that conditions are wrong, and no one ought to take advantage of conditions, right or wrong, to the injury of another or of one's self," said Joseph slowly.

"I do not understand," said the professor.

"One might be called upon to defend acts such as yours would have been had you been willing to do a certain thing—had the princess lived and you had married her."

"You mean I should have been in ill repute with the Jews?"

"No, with the Christians; no one would have forgiven a Jew who had captured a princess, even if the Jew had foresworn the faith of his fathers; he would always be thought of as a Jew who had tricked a Christian lady into marrying him; a wizard, who deserved burning at the stake," said Joseph.

"And with these ideas you still work among the poor regardless of creed, you still act the Christ on the lower Nalevki!" cried Merau.

"If, as you say, Pan Jean, I am acting the Christ on the lower Nalevki, I beg you to remember that I am acting a legitimate part. Christ was a Jew; I must, therefore, do all the good I can for the Jews, but as the others accepted Him as their own, I naturally owe something to them also," he answered with a smile.

There was a knock at the door. Merau's servant entered and announced Mr. Epstein, who stood in the door breathing stertorously and wiping his face with a red silk handkerchief.

"Come in," cried Merau and went to greet the newcomer.

Mr. Epstein entered the studio followed by his daughter and Beatrice. One look sufficed to show that Beatrice was the original of Merau's painting.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Epstein," said Merau, shaking hands with the banker.

"Glad to see me!" the other cried; "a fine

time we had getting here; climbing five flights of stairs is no joke, and Miss New York is nearly dead. Out there in America they have lifts, but here! Ah, how do you do, Professor? And young gentleman? Glad to see you. Why so strange, young gentleman?" he said, shaking hands with Joseph.

The latter bowed; he was ghastly pale and found it impossible to utter a word; his heart seemed to stand still, and he felt as if the ground were giving way under him. He was not prepared for the shock that the sight of the American girl gave him and he heaved a sigh of relief when the banker turned his attention to the others.

"Artists, like eagles, perch high; eh, Mr. Merau?"

"They are forced to, Mr. Epstein; they find nothing to eat down below; there are too many vultures about," laughed the artist.

"Good, good," cried the banker. "Oh, I beg your pardon, Professor. Let me introduce you to this young Republican, Professor von Horovitz, Miss Beatrice Rosen; Mr. Joseph Horovitz, Miss Rosen."

Joseph bowed to the girl, whose face crimsoned as she looked at the man who appeared to have stepped out of her dream to greet her. But she was puzzled. His name was Horovitz, so he could not be the one she longed to meet, and yet—her intuition was strong, and she yielded to the magnetism of the personality before her.

The colour in her face came and went; her eyes, slightly humid, seemed to be searching for some suggestion that the man who stood before her was the one whose image she cherished in her soul. She hoped he would come to her assistance, but he showed no signs of offering an explanation. He was bewildered, awed into speechlessness. He was afraid of the web into which fate was drawing him.

Ella Epstein, with a woman's instinct, had divined what accident had brought about, and tried to bridge over the gap between these two beings.

"Mr. Horovitz used to call on us occasionally with Count Waldeck," she said, "but he has no desire to cultivate people other than those who are in hospitals or in the slums. You see, Mr. Horovitz, your work is not unknown to me."

He felt relieved.

"I sincerely hope I have not established a reputation for repugnance to polite society, Miss Epstein," he said.

Beatrice closed her eyes and listened to his voice, which intoxicated her.

"I would not go so far as to say that, but you might have looked us up. Miss Rosen's inclinations are not unlike your own, and you might be able to direct her efforts."

"I am afraid I can teach Miss Rosen little about dispensing charity. A woman is generally more apt at that work than a man, " he replied.

"Come girls, we mustn't stay," cried Mr. Epstein.

Ella and Beatrice rose and Joseph with them.

"Come and see us, Mr. Horovitz," said Ella.

Beatrice looked at him with pleading eyes.

"Thank you, Miss Epstein," he replied, "I will call as soon as I find an opportunity."

"Make the opportunity," she rejoined.

"If I cannot make it, I will certainly make use of it when it presents itself," he said, and smiled.

"Let us hope that Dame Opportunity will present herself very, very soon," said Ella.

Joseph was strangely moved by the smile that broke over Beatrice's face at her friend's words. Amanda had rarely smiled. The scenes with her were always sad, because he was unyielding, always fighting against his own passion. Now he could imagine what bliss there would be in Amanda's smile; he longed with all his soul to see it. For a moment he had believed that this American girl was in reality none other than Amanda, who had followed him to plead her cause. He could not think that Beatrice appeared to others as she did to him, and thus, moment by moment, he yielded to her, and with this yielding there came great happiness into his heart.

"I am sure the opportunity will come sooner than you think, Miss Epstein," he said.

"Mark my words, sir," broke in the banker's voice, "the big Prussian will get as good as he gives, and France is the country to do it; the third Napoleon may have short legs, but he has a long head and a good army. He will rap Bismarck on the knuckles."

"If it comes to a war between Prussia and France there will be an end of Napoleon," said the Professor.

"Well, come away, children," said the banker; "and, young gentleman, don't look so strange. *Au revoir, cher Professeur;* remember what I told you about Bismarck. Au revoir, Merau; splendid picture; only you live too high. In America they have lifts, yes; but here, well——"

The broken sentences and the sound of his great voice that rose to a falsetto and fell to a growl, gradually died away as he stamped down the stairs.

When they had gone, Merau looked at Joseph and whistled. He had seen at once the effect the sight of the American girl had upon his young friend.

"He is caught, Papa Daniel, caught like a butterfly in the net of the beautiful American fairy," he cried.

The Professor showed no surprise; he put his hand on Joseph's shoulder.

"Is it true?" he asked tenderly.

Joseph started.

"I beg your pardon, uncle?"

"I asked if the girl had really made an impression on you. At your age one usually knows this at once. Go ahead, my boy, and count on my support. It has always been my ambition to aid lovers," he said smilingly.

"Thank you, uncle; but it would be love's labour lost. I will not go so far as to say that it is

infinitely easier to commit an error than to correct one," he said with a fine smile.

"What error can you possibly commit by falling in love with this beautiful girl? What are your objections?" asked the Professor.

"Why are you assuming that I have objections?" was the counter question.

"You spoke as if you would not care to cultivate her acquaintance," said the Professor.

"You read more into my words than I meant," Joseph rejoined.

"But you would not seek her in marriage?" asked his uncle.

"No."

"Then you have a reason, I suppose?"

"A most potent one."

"May I know it?"

"She does not look like a Jewess."

"What?" cried the Professor and Merau with one voice.

"My explanation might prove as strange to you as my statement, still I shall make it in the hope that you may be satisfied and not attempt to lead me into further temptation," he said with a smile.

"It all depends whether you have objections to matrimony in general, in which case your explanation would not have the force of conviction," said Merau.

"I have no objection to matrimony; I will even admit that a Jew might marry a Gentile and expect a reasonable amount of happiness, provided they lived in a country where there is no preju-

dice against the Jew. Even the Jews themselves might condone an alliance of this sort under certain conditions. But think of a Jewess who looks like a Gentile, is beautiful as a goddess, and has the inconvenience of a Jewish husband. It would be tantamount to inciting all the officers of the garrison in Warsaw and Praga to cut each other's throats and incidentally that of the husband. You know that Russian officers consider a Jewish woman public property and a beautiful Jewess their own particular property. Now, gentlemen, have you still the heart to urge me to follow this beautiful girl of malice prepense? Would you be so cruel as to wish her and me such dire disaster?" he concluded with a laugh.

It was obvious to Merau and the Professor that this was not the real reason. The latter was genuinely distressed by the manifestation of this new phase in his nephew's character. Who and what had caused this evident bitterness, this new cynicism that coloured Joseph's words? He could think of no reason for it. He was certain that it was not Ella Epstein. He was equally certain that Joseph had no entanglement of which he would be ashamed. Even if he had, Professor Horovitz had been sufficiently tried in the fire of misfortune not to blame his nephew. He would have stood by him at all hazards.

"I said, Joseph, that you can count on my support, and I meant it; there is nothing in the world that you may do or may have done that will not find sympathy in my heart," said he.

"Thank you, dear uncle," said Joseph, grasping his uncle's hand. "But you need not worry, I have not the least desire to entangle myself."

"I sincerely wish you would—in this case," the Professor rejoined.

"I cannot, dear uncle," said Joseph.

"But can you give a solid reason? You know what this would mean to me and to your mother," urged the Professor.

Joseph's heart beat violently. He saw that he could not remain silent in the face of such an appeal without deeply hurting his uncle, whom he dearly loved. The mention of his mother distressed him, too. His life was one long chain of devotion to her. But he knew her soul, he knew that when the time came for him to say to her, "Mother, I must do this thing," she would put her arms around his neck and say to him, "Son, you know best," even though she wept as she said it.

Yet he owed it to his uncle to explain, and if he could not tell the secret that lay deep in his heart, he could at least tell part of it.

"To give you a reason for my present action would be to court argument, and of that my case does not admit, because my desire is to bear lightly a duty which to most men would appear quite irrational. I want to be happy and light of heart in my work. I am declining to run after a life of love and luxury because I deem my occupation infinitely sweeter and more potent to give me true happiness. You might argue that

a man need not cease to be an active agent in the cause of humanity because he makes a home for himself. That I would not deny. But I deny anyone's right to lessen the full measure of my happiness, and if I find the full measure of happiness in my work, why should I curtail it by other things and other duties?

"However, let me leave argument alone and try to give you a plain statement of my case. It was the dream of my life to be in some degree a help to others. During the early years of my life this feeling was wholly centred in my mother. The time came when I saw my dream realised, and my mother well and happy. Then the larger problem presented itself, and as the desire of a lifetime cannot be satisfied when only one-half of it is accomplished, I took up my present work not only with pleasure, but with passion. In time also I came to see that this passion was the passion of the very greatest men that ever lived; Moses, Isaiah, Buddha, and Christ were moved by this desire, by this passion. You may say I am presumptuous, but since I can afford to satisfy my desire, why deny myself the pleasure? You, dear uncle, have it in your power to curb my passion by withdrawing from me the means. That would not, however, extinguish my passion; I should then do what I could and in all probability die of grief that I could not do more."

His tones had sunk to a whisper. Both Merau and the Professor were profoundly moved and the former turned away to hide his emotion.

The Professor had turned deadly pale and trembled in every limb. He had followed Joseph's words with keen attention and a feeling of dismay. He saw all his plans swept away, all his hopes annihilated. He knew that he was powerless to battle against this gentle yet inflexible resolve. He did not penetrate the wall behind which was hidden the real cause, although Joseph had almost recklessly exposed it; nor could he conceive that his nephew had a secret.

At length he composed himself sufficiently to say:

"I hope you will change your mind. At least give yourself a chance. I am not pleading for myself, although I shall not deny that it would please me much to see you happy in the way I think of happiness. I confess that I am not gifted with the noble passion that prompts self-sacrifice."

"You are," said Joseph, "you sacrificed the best the world could give you for an idea——"

"Which, I regret to say, was foolish, criminal," the Professor rejoined.

"But you would do it again," said Joseph.

The Professor was silent.

"And you would be right," Joseph added.

"I think it was and would be extremely wrong," cried Merau; "I argued with him then as he argues with you now. One ought not to run away from happiness for the sake of a chimera, and you ought not, Yushu."

"I can promise you I shall not run away, at

least not from this girl who pleases me very much; but, then—well, gentlemen," he cried almost gaily, "I see by my watch, for your clock, Pan Jean, has stopped, that I am remiss in my duty; I beg you will excuse me, I must go."

"Will you not stay and lunch with me?" asked Merau.

"Not to-day, thank you," said Joseph, and, shaking hands with them, he left the room.

As he descended the stairs, sigh after sigh escaped his lips.

"You shall never know, dear love, what it costs me to keep your life from the misery of being chained to mine."

He had unconsciously spoken aloud, and the sound of his words frightened him. He ran down the stairs and felt a sort of relief as the fresh air blew in his face.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER THE DUEL.

Shortly after Joseph had gone, the Professor, too, went away. It was his intention to talk seriously to Joseph. He thought it wrong to be silent in the face of such obstinacy; for he considered Joseph's attitude nothing more or less than a symptom of a disordered mind, and he believed it his duty to cure the malady, or at least oppose Joseph's resolution with all his might.

Joseph was nowhere to be seen. The Professor went to the hospital and he learned that Joseph had been there, but had left. He was forced to go home and wait for his nephew. He was greatly perturbed and had a strong foreboding of evil.

"At times one has to cut away a limb to save a life; I shall speak to him even if I have to offend him," he murmured.

But the word sounded harsh to him.

"Offend! I could never do such a thing; but I shall plead with him."

"Whom will you plead with, Daniel?" asked Mrs. Rosen, putting her arm around the Professor's neck.

"With Joseph," he replied.

"Why? What for? What has happened?" cried Mrs. Rosen.

"I want him to marry."

"Marry! Is there a woman in this world good enough for my son?" she said, and the truth sounded even clearer in her maternal pride.

"I met an American girl at Merau's studio who, I think, would be the ideal wife for him. She is beautiful, distinguished, and of evident refinement."

"A Jewess?"

"Yes; by the way, she is a namesake of yours, Beatrice Rosen."

"Americans, Rosen! I wonder if it is our Rosen. Why did you not find out?" asked Mrs. Rosen.

"My dear, what with the claims of the effervescent Epstein and dear old Jean, and the attention I paid to the pretty girl as she conversed with Joseph, there was no time to find out anything; but I understand that she is a relative of the banker. When she had gone Joseph was like a man in a dream; she had evidently made an impression on him. But I am afraid of his ideas. If I only had him here now I would give him a good talking to."

At that moment, however, Joseph was not even in Warsaw. Instead of Joseph there came a note in which he stated that he had been called to Praga and would not be home until late.

The Professor sighed deeply.

"One might battle against a crude, brutal force," he said, "but I confess my inability to

cope with this mysterious and subtle power of his."

"Do not worry, dear," Mrs. Rosen rejoined, "he knows best."

"I do not understand you, sister; do you mean that you would encourage him in his irrational surrender of the best this world affords? He owes something to you, to me, to the world in which he lives," he cried with trembling voice. "You have lost the greater part of your life; I lost the best years of mine in misery, in sorrow, and in sadness, and now that we have the chance to see the latter part of our lives lightened by a gleam of happiness, this young man, this strange reproduction of an ancient and fabled personality, wants to envelop us both in the gloom of self-abnegation and to burden me with the curse of outliving him. It is horrible, sister, horrible!" he cried.

"Daniel, dear, do not give way to such thoughts. If it be the will of God, then Joseph will fulfill your dearest wishes; if not, we must be obedient. I have never opposed my will to that of my dear son and all has gone well. Let us be patient."

Her gentle words and her evident fortitude calmed the Professor; he was half ashamed of his own unbelief, and as he led his sister to the dining-room he inwardly promised himself to mend his ways and try to attain to something of that faith which appeared to make the weak

strong and inspire the gentle of heart with courage to bear misfortune calmly.

When dinner was over he went to the library, lit a cigar, and took up a book. He repeated over and over again the words of his sister, "I have never opposed my will to that of my dear son and all has gone well." "My dear boy," he murmured, "I will not fall short of that faith, come what may."

There was a knock at the door and Vladislav announced Count Waldeck de Lack.

The Professor greeted Waldeck cordially, but was surprised to note his haggard appearance.

"The festivities in the country have had a bad effect on your lordship," he said with a smile.

"I came here to ask your advice and assistance in a serious affair."

"A duel, I suppose."

"A duel."

"Fought?"

"Fought this afternoon."

"Then your antagonist is either dead or in bed —in either case you are the better of the two. Who was your antagonist?"

"Colonel Vladimir de Prussnitzki of the Pultava regiment."

The Professor started.

"This *is* a serious affair," he said.

"I appreciate its gravity, but would care little were it not that it involves Joseph."

The Professor sprang to his feet.

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"Joseph was arrested and taken to Praga."

The Professor sank into the chair as if struck down. A moment later he sprang up again, his eyes flashing.

"How did it happen? What has my boy in common with you, with your savage brawls? How dared you involve him? Speak!"

"I swear to you that he is innocent and knew nothing of my action until he unfortunately arrived upon the scene," said Waldeck.

"And then?" asked the Professor less harshly.

"There was an accident."

"How?"

"My antagonist cried, 'The Jew', and before I knew it I had run him through. For a moment he stood like one transfixed, then he fell. I turned and saw Joseph. I was so unnerved at the sight of him that I trembled in every limb. He at once examined the wounded man and told me to get a carriage. I hastened away and when I returned both had disappeared. The park watchman told me that a number of officers riding by had ordered the policeman to take Joseph and the wounded man to Praga. I am willing to deliver myself into the hands of the commandant."

Professor Horovitz heaved a sigh of relief.

"The affair is less dangerous than it at first appeared," he said. "You had seconds, of course."

"No; I struck the Colonel, we at once retired to the little birch wood in the Lazienki and fought."

"That makes the matter more serious. What caused the trouble? A woman, I suppose."

"I avenged an insult to one," Waldeck somewhat coldly replied.

"Any particular woman?"

"My cousin, Miss Beatrice Rosen."

"The American girl who visits the Epsteins?" cried the Professor excitedly.

"The same; I am glad to know that you have the honour of her acquaintance," said Waldeck.

But the Professor appeared not to have heard the remark. His brow was clouded, a great sadness had suddenly come over him.

"What new troubles are in store for us?" he murmured.

Waldeck, who thought only of his immediate trouble, could not conceive that anyone beside himself could possibly be involved in this matter.

"They cannot possibly hold Joseph responsible for an act in which he had not the least concern, and I am willing to bear the consequences. Come, my carriage is at the door, let us drive to Praga," he said.

The Professor made no response; he took his hat and cane and followed Waldeck to the carriage.

CHAPTER IV.

JEALOUSY.

The Commandant, a fat, bearded, jolly-faced Russian, was taking his after dinner vutki in company with several officers, but when the Professor's card was handed to him he excused himself to his guests and went into the adjoining room where Waldeck and the Professor awaited him. He greeted the latter cordially.

"You are in time to have a quiet glass with a few earth born Russians," he said.

"A thousand times obliged, my Commandant; but I beg you to excuse me for to-night. I came here to plead for my young friend, the Count de Lack, and to get my nephew out of your clutches."

"Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to keep your nephew here; for though I could not induce him to take dinner with me, I had at least the benefit of a talk with him. It was all a mistake. The officers were under the impression that the Colonel had been attacked by your nephew, and arrested him. He explained and I sent him away with regret."

"I thank you," said the Professor, taking the Commandant's hand. "Let me hope you will be equally gracious with my young friend here."

"As he has you for an advocate, the Count is at liberty to follow up his gallant affair; but I

should warn his lordship against another attack upon a Russian officer, for such we must consider it in view of the fact that the duel was fought without seconds. I do not care to have our officers brought to the alternative of committing suicide or quitting the army for fighting irregular duels. I have prepared a statement for the 'Daily Courier' which will anticipate any disagreeable talk and I trust the noble Count will in the future be less eager to fight."

Waldeck found but little satisfaction in the Commandant's words. He recognised that he had escaped actual disgrace only through the powerful influence of the Professor. Three things were obvious to him: He had accomplished nothing in the way of finding Beatrice's cousin; he had caused his friend great inconvenience, and he had barely missed making the woman he loved notorious.

He went back to his hotel with the firm intention of leaving Poland the very next day and joining his parents at Interlaken, where they and the Baroness Levanovska were staying.

When he got to his room he found two notes awaiting him. One was from Joseph; he opened it at once, and read:

"I have no reproaches for a man who protects a woman's honour. De Prussnitzki will live and, I hope, repent. I have asked permission to visit him. You must do the same. JOSEPH."

"He has the heart of a hero and the soul of a

saint," he murmured, and opened the second note. It was from his mother:

"Dushki:

"We are coming home as fast as the train will take us. I am half sorry to go back to Poland at this time of the season, but Amanda is ill and wants to be at home. We cannot let her travel alone. Please engage apartments at the Hotel de l'Europe.

"A million kisses from Your
"MAMMA."

"Well, fate decrees that I shall not escape explanations, so I shall stay in Warsaw, devote myself to my beautiful cousin, visit my sick antagonist and be as miserable as a man can be who loves hopelessly. I do not wish this cousin of hers, Joseph (who may be a myth), any harm, but I wish he would come forth to disillusion Beatrice," he said to himself, and rang for his valet.

"Take a drushki, drive to Professor Horovitz's house, and request Mr. Joseph Horovitz to meet me at the club to-morrow between ten and eleven in the forenoon."

Joseph was not at home, the valet reported, and the Professor's servant could not tell when he would be back.

On the following morning Waldeck again sent to the Professor's house and received the same reply. Then he went out to hunt for Joseph, but failed to find him. "He left only a few minutes ago," was the answer he received at all the places

where as a rule he was certain to find him. In the evening he sent a note to Joseph, but on hearing that Joseph was still "not at home" a terrible fury seized him.

"You are stupid," he cried to his servant. "Can't you find out when he will be at home?"

Of a sudden it struck him that Joseph might desire to avoid him; but he called himself stupid for the thought.

"Why, he is my best friend," he reflected.

"But do not forget that you met him once in the Lazienki with Beatrice and Ella," said the little demon that was torturing his soul.

"That argues absolutely nothing; he is a man and a gentleman and it would only require a word from me——"

"The eloquence of a Demosthenes would fail to argue passion out of a human heart; and the more of a man and a gentleman one is, the more intense is the passion when it once has taken possession of the heart," the harrowing demon continued.

"Bah, he is a saint with a mind bent on charity, on the sick and the poor."

"Very true," the torturer suggested, giving a deeper dig, "but he is a very handsome saint; women go mad over that sort of saint, they yield their virtue and their honour to such men; they become either angels or devils for the sake of such saints. Then, too, he is very clever, very eloquent, highly connected, and he and she are of the same faith and——"

"Be silent, I say! A thousand devils!" he cried, springing to his feet.

His eyes gleamed wildly, his tortured soul was filled with madness. Forgotten was his promise to Howard Rosen, forgotten also was his love for his friend; all he thought of was the woman he loved, and that another might take her from him, had possibly taken her already. Obsessed by this idea, he ran up and down the room like a caged beast. He tore his hair, he cried and moaned by turns; he stood still and glared vacantly, then ran as if all the furies were after him. He was love-mad, he had made himself mad by his super-sensitiveness. He was, after all, young, proud, rich, and an aristocrat. In him at that moment flamed fiercely the temperament of his race, a race that for centuries fought and defeated the Asiatic hordes; that fell, but rose again, always fighting, never resting, hoping against hope. At that moment, too, he recalled that his rival was a Jew, a man of a race that his forefathers had treated like savages, whom they slaughtered without mercy, without compunction, a race considered at one time too low to be regarded as human: one of this race tried to take from him the best thing in the world! The fire of pride and passion blazed within him, and with a cry that but faintly expressed his distress, he threw himself down and hid his head in his hands.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEART OF THE BANKER.

"Did you ever hear of such a thing?" cried Mr. Epstein. "To fight a duel in a public park!"

"Who fought it, papa?" asked Ella, sipping her morning coffee.

"Who but this young lady's dear cousin, Count Waldeck, and Colonel de Prussnitzki! Here it is, black on white, in the Courier," he replied. "Don't let Mamma know it, she is not well and I do not want her to get excited on account of all this foolishness," he added.

Beatrice and Ella looked at each other, the former blushing, the latter smiling.

"Let us see the paper, papa," said Ella.

"Never mind the paper. You youngsters eat your breakfast and get out for a ride or a drive," he cried.

"Now we shall not stir if you do not give us the paper or read the whole story to us; shall we, Beatrice?" said Ella.

"Wha-what, rebellion! By the beard of a Tartar, rebellion in my own house! And you, Miss New York, do you dare to tacitly encourage this little rebel?"

"Well, you might read the story, uncle Epstein, and prevent rebellion and a possible change in the administration," Beatrice rejoined.

"A wise man knows when to submit," said the banker. "Now, listen:

" 'The DAILY COURIER was honoured with authoritative information concerning a duel that took place yesterday afternoon at the Lazienki between the noble lord of Vielga, Count Waldeck de Lack, son and heir to the Count Cassimir de Lack, Imperial Councillor to His Imperial Majesty the Czar, and the Colonel Vladimir de Prussnitzki of the Pultava regiment stationed at the fortress of Praga——"

"Get your breath, uncle Epstein, if there is more of that sentence," cried Beatrice, for the moment forgetting her interest in the story in her amusement at the formality and length of the introduction to a simple statement of fact.

"I suppose they have a different way of saying things over there in New York," said the banker slowly.

"Yes, very different; but I do beg your pardon, uncle Epstein, for the interruption," said Beatrice, holding out her hand.

"Granted, Miss New York," said Ella, imitating her father. "Now continue with the story, father dear, and don't laugh your two selves into hysterics."

Beatrice and Epstein were laughing heartily at Ella's imitation of her father. At last the banker composed himself and read:

" 'The Colonel was seriously but not dangerously wounded, and is now confined to his bed in his apartment at Praga. The seconds, so the in-

formation is given out, were Mr. Joseph Horovitz, nephew of our famous townsman, Professor Baron von Horovitz, and one of the Park watchmen. We do not permit ourselves to make any comment on the affair, but we shall await developments and give the news to the public as soon as we are permitted to do so."

"You do not mean that the editor actually wrote that?" asked Beatrice.

"Wrote what?"

"That he would give the news to the public as soon as he were permitted to do so!"

"Of course he wrote it, and meant it, too. If he did otherwise his paper would be confiscated and he himself marched off to Siberia," said the banker.

"Oh, I forgot that this is not America," said Beatrice.

"No, this is not America," said Epstein, "and people here must be very careful what they say, unless," he added with a sigh, "they have as much money as your father or stand as high as the Count de Lack, then they can do as they please."

"But my papa does what is right and he surely does not need to be afraid of anybody," Beatrice rejoined.

"The Government may be of a different opinion," said the banker.

"How?" asked Beatrice.

"The Government may not desire the humble

folk in the country to know too much. Your father builds schools——"

"He does with the consent of the Governor of Plotzk," interrupted Beatrice.

"Certainly, certainly; and he gives right and left and makes it easy for the tax gatherers to get their money from the people, and has established a newspaper agency in Dobrzyn; he does all this with the consent of the Governor, certainly, but if he had not so much money he could not get the consent of the Governor," said the banker.

"You don't mean to say that the Government would have any objection to a man giving money to the people to better their condition?" cried Beatrice.

"That is precisely what I do mean. The Government undertakes to direct all the activity of its subjects in this country. It says that there shall be an orphan asylum in Plotzk, a home for the aged in Vlotzlavek, an industrial school in Warsaw. Your father has built these institutions in Dobrzyn. He has virtually acted against the will and the intent of the Government. In an ordinary case the Government would say, 'You desire to spend a million roubles in endowments of this kind; you will please to hand over this sum to the authorities, and if they deem it advisable to employ the funds as you suggest, well and good; if not, they may spend it in the paving of streets or the buying of guns, because a paternal

Government knows, or it thinks it knows, what is best for its country.'"

Beatrice was bewildered.

"But this is horrible," she cried.

"You think so?" asked the banker.

"I do; I think people ought to have the right to spend their money as they please," she rejoined.

"So they have. A man may gamble away his fortune, he may even throw it away, and the Government will not say a word; but when he presumes to the right to act as a little Providence in the life of a people every individual of which is a subject, body and soul, of the Emperor of Russia, that man must have the consent of the master of the land. It is as if a man were to come to my house and tell me to feed my servants on plovers' eggs and spring chickens, and offered me the money to do so. I should very probably tell him to go to Jericho or to leave the money in my hands for me to do what I pleased with it. It is very simple," the banker said and smiled sarcastically at Beatrice.

"It may be very simple, but I do not subscribe to it and I am glad that papa can do as he pleases," was the rejoinder.

"Money is a mighty agent in any country; in Russia it is all powerful. Now, take this affair of the duel. Any person other than Count Waldeck de Lack would have paid dearly for fighting in a public park. But here is the great Count on one side and a high Russian officer on the

other side, and the matter not only is not considered in the light of an offense, but I'll wager that the Commandant himself or the Governor General gave the information to the Courier," said the banker, putting on his glasses to read his paper.

Suddenly he uttered a cry, his face turned purple.

"What is this?" he cried. "Is this true? Tell me, Ella, is it true?"

He handed the paper over to his daughter and as she read, her face paled.

" 'Later and equally reliable information shows that the cause of the trouble between the Count and the Colonel was the daughter of a Jewish banker whose persistent efforts to invade the field of our aristocracy are evidently nearing their desired end, considering that he has found so noble a champion as the Count de Lack. We assume that the noble lord of Vielga was a little too hasty, as the Colonel de Prussnitzki is too gallant an officer to publicly insult even a Jewess.'

"The postscript is false in every detail," she said, handing back the paper. "I was not insulted and neither Beatrice nor I saw the Count yesterday."

"Well, something must be true in this notice; what is it?" he cried.

Ella looked questioningly at Beatrice, and as the latter inclined her head affirmatively, Ella said:

"The innocent cause of all the trouble, that is, between Beatrice and the officer, was Mr. Horovitz."

"Mr. Horovitz!" cried the Banker, gasping. "Impossible! Why, I would stake my fortune on that young man's honour. How did he come to cause trouble?"

"He never said a word that was not absolutely correct; although what took place between him and the Colonel ought to have induced the latter to fight with Mr. Horovitz and not with Count Waldeck, as he was not even upon the scene," said Ella.

"That does not explain anything. I asked how the trouble originated and why," cried Epstein.

"Well, we were near the Casino, directly behind the botanical garden, when we saw Mr. Horovitz coming toward us."

"Please excuse me," said Beatrice, and, rising, she went from the room.

"The trouble evidently lies there," said the Banker in an undertone.

"I am certain she is in love with him."

"With whom?" cried Epstein.

"With Joseph—Mr. Horovitz."

The banker heaved a sigh of relief.

"I thought you meant with the Count," he said.

"Oh, no; she looks upon him merely as a relation. But Mr. Horovitz—well, when he approached she turned red and pale by turns. Then she said, 'Do you know, Ella, it seems to me as if

I had known him all my life.' Then for the first time I had the idea that she might be in love with him. 'Don't be a goose,' I said, 'why, you have seen him only once.'

"'Yes,' said she, and he is the most glorious man I have ever seen.'

"'He is certainly a splendid man, but by the way you speak of him one would think you were in love with him,' I answered.

"She put her hand on my mouth, and before I could say another word he stood before us."

"Gracious me, daughter, don't give me a novel in three volumes; tell me quickly what happened," cried her father.

"Don't be so impatient, papa. I have my own way of telling the story and you must listen. Well, he looked like a different man from the one we used to know. He smiled so beautifully that I almost fell in love with him myself. However, I bethought me quickly that nothing short of an artistocrat would do for my father's daughter, so I smothered my feelings, looked at him meekly and enjoyed the sunshine of his smile."

"Then what happened?" asked the banker.

"What then happened appears more strange to me now, as I think of it, than when it actually took place. The Colonel came out from the flower house with a big bunch of La France roses in his hand. When he saw us he stopped; then he walked up to us, and touching Mr. Horovitz with the hilt of his sword, said:

"'Do we meet again, Jew?'

"Mr. Horovitz looked at him calmly.

"'Yes, Colonel,' he said.

"Is this blonde another of the women you are leading away from evil?'

"'If you intend to stay here, Colonel,' was the answer.

"The Colonel pushed Joseph away and presented the flowers to Beatrice; but she refused them, and taking my arm tried to cross the road. He kept pace with us. Beatrice looked in the direction of Joseph, who was following, and when the Colonel took hold of her arm and said, 'Beautiful Jewess, take the flowers,' she cried out, 'Mr. Horovitz!' He was with us in a moment and taking the Colonel by the shoulders he spun him around like a top. I almost pitied the Colonel as he lay sprawling in the dust. Mr. Horovitz hurried us away and, hailing a passing drushki, put us into it.

"'Come with us, Mr. Horovitz, he will kill you,' Beatrice cried.

"'He will not; he does not kill men,' he said and smiled.

"I know she loves him, papa, and—and—they are so well matched," she said and burst out crying.

Something in the heart of the banker stirred; he laid his hand on his daughter's arm.

"My dear child," he said, "there is nothing in this world that I would deny you if it were in my power to give; I would even forego my own long cherished ambition if thereby I might secure

your happiness. But reflect that if Beatrice loves him and he loves her, nothing can possibly be done, and, dearest Ellinka," he said, stroking her hair, "I never imagined—if I had only known—"

Ella sobbed; her father's gentleness, the fact that he was willing to sacrifice his fancy for her happiness, touched her most deeply.

"Don't cry, Ellinka," he continued, and the tears stole into his eyes. "Don't break your father's heart; be my own brave lass. We all have our wishes and desires, but we must be brave when we are forced to deny ourselves. Your father may have had desires and wishes of his own which he could not realize; be brave, my own little girl."

Ella sprang up and, smiling through her tears, put her hands on her father's cheeks.

"You dear, darling old papa, don't worry, I'll be good," she said and, kissing him on the forehead, ran from the room.

CHAPTER VI.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

Beatrice had gone to her room to hide her emotion.

A great weight burdened her heart.

The new life that she had so suddenly entered appeared to have as many thorns as it had roses.

Something like a sense of treason to a former ideal insinuated itself and caused her a little compunction, but only a very little. While a man may beguile himself with the idea that he loves and may tell a woman so even after he has ceased to love her, a woman is quicker to show by word and deed that she has transferred her favour to other quarters. No man could ever hope to be so decided in his fickleness, so frank and outspoken as a woman can be when her fancy, butterfly-like, lights on a fresh flower.

Beatrice's emotion, therefore, did not flow from a heart surcharged with grief at the disappearance of the vision that for years had dwelt in her soul; nor did she feel any sense of shame at being detected in an act of imagined "faithlessness". She had talked so much to Ella Epstein about that mysterious and wonderful cousin, that Ella had said:

"I think, Beatrice, that you are a little bit in love with your cousin."

"Hush, Ellinka! How can anyone be in love with a person one has never seen?" Beatrice said.

"Really you are innocent," said Ella. "As Mitchkievich has sung:

"'If thou wert not a dream to me,
I'd press my burning lips to thine,
And life were sweet to live for thee,
Thou dream-begotten love of mine.'"

The new ideal had put Ella's suggestion completely out of Beatrice's mind. She had not now the remotest idea why her friend should so charmingly insist that she should be true to her former ideal. The tangibility of the one she beheld was too potent to leave thought or feeling for any other. She felt herself bound hand and foot, heart and soul. Analysis of her feelings seemed impossible. She was not even mistress of her thoughts. All she knew was that she must yield to that gentle force that tugged at her heart-strings. The publicity caused by the incident with the Colonel in the Park dismayed her, but Epstein's vehement assertion of his faith in Joseph pleased and touched her. Still, the discussion that forced an explanation from Ella and was bound to reveal her secret to the banker, filled her with shame. She had left the room not to weep in remorse, but to think how she might act to bring about the result she desired. She felt that she ought to act, but how?

"You ought to seek his closer acquaintance and

gradually show him that you love him," said her conscience.

"If it were not so utterly unbecoming I would invite him to come here," she murmured, and was startled at her own words.

"That is exactly what you ought to do," said conscience. "There is a splendid pretext for it. You might easily desire to know how he came to be one of the seconds in the duel between Count Waldeck and the Colonel. The quarrel was on your account and you have a right to know."

"I will," said Beatrice to herself, and the blood rushed to her face at the words; she felt that she must not yield to the impulse.

"What shall I do?" she cried, and tears came to her eyes at the utter helplessness in which she found herself.

"I will write to papa," she said and sat down at the little desk.

A knock at the door was followed by the entrance of Ella.

"What are you doing, Dushka?" Ella cried, putting her arms around Beatrice's neck.

"Oh, Ella, I am so miserable," said Beatrice, and hid her face on her friend's bosom.

Ella lulled her with maternal gentleness.

"Don't worry, sweetheart. You ought to be very happy. I know that he loves you," she said.

"Do you think so?" said Beatrice, and turned up her face to her friend. Joy struggling with doubt shone through her tears.

"I am certain," the other replied, and her voice trembled as she spoke.

"Why, Ella, what is the matter? You are trembling. Was your papa very severe?" Beatrice asked.

"Papa is the dearest, kindest man on earth, but all these explanations are too much for me. Come, let us take a drive in the Park and leave to chance what is beyond our control. You know these matters cannot be forced," said Ella.

Beatrice burst out laughing.

"To hear you speak, one would think that you were an old woman with a wonderful amount of experience," she said.

"Love makes one wise," the other responded.

"Are you in love?"

"I? Oh, no; but one learns by observation."

"That is unkind of you, Ella; you ought to confide in me as I am confiding in you," said Beatrice, little thinking that she had in fact confided nothing and that it was Ella's suggestion rather than her own statement which let the other into the secret of her thoughts.

"My dear," said Ella, "there is nothing to confide. I am not a fairy princess like you. My father is not an Aladdin like yours. I am made of ordinary clay, without the least bit of romance in my composition. Your father is an American, a republican, and does not care for an alliance with the nobility. My father does, and I must live up to his wishes. When he has found the right person he will let me know and then I shall

try to cultivate the acquaintance of my future husband. It has been drilled into me ever since I came from the convent. To act contrary to my father's plans would break his heart, and that I would never do. You know what a dear he is; so I say nothing, I live and take things as they come and await the inevitable."

Beatrice had listened with bated breath. It sounded so strange to her, so utterly at variance with what she felt and thought, that she but slowly comprehended the burden of misery that pressed down the soul of this sweet girl. Then she recognised that her friend was sacrificing herself for a chimera, for something that had no value and not only could not bring happiness, but might become unspeakable agony if she did not marry the right man. Her soul went out to Ella.

"Ellinka," she cried, "you ought not to yield to such folly. Your father has no right to sell you to satisfy his vanity."

"Hush, Beatrice, he does nothing of the sort and never will. I shall have my choice and most certainly shall have my bit of love making. But I shall marry none but an aristocrat, and that for two reasons. There is no Jew in our class with whom my father would care to form an alliance, and papa expects to be raised to the nobility. If the Russian Emperor has made a Baron of a trader at whose shop our servants used to buy brooms, why should he not make a Baron or Count of a first class banker who has done a con-

siderable amount for commerce and the community? But come, we have wasted enough time; the beautiful morning will slip away, and then it will be too hot to go out," said Ella.

As they were about to leave, Epstein called to them.

"Here, you little butterflies, here is some good news for you," he said.

"What is it, papa? Tell us quickly, we are starving for a bit of good news."

"There will be a public reception next Monday at the house of Professor Horovitz, in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his doctorate. On Sunday he will give a dinner to a few friends. Mamma, you, and I are invited, and Miss New York is not—ah, hem—" he said, looking at Beatrice, "to stay away under any consideration," he added, enjoying the confusion he caused her.

"If you are so tantalising, you naughty papa, I shall go to the lower Nalevki and fall in love with the first young Talmud Jew I see," said Ella.

It was, of course, only a jest, but the face of the banker turned pale, and then Beatrice understood how deeply rooted was the prejudice of this Jew against his own kind.

In reality, however, it was less the prejudice against his people than the fear of being reminded of his own plebeian origin; and the feeling was perfectly justifiable in one seeking association with the Polish nobility, which, like their German kind, does not much love the newly

baked Jewish noble, baptised or not, and at his appearance is wont to say:

"Do you know whence the odor of onions and garlic comes?"

"Noble onions," one would say.

"Noble garlic," another.

Epstein knew all this, and yet he was keen on the quest for the coveted patent of nobility, and spent his money lavishly to that end.

"With your ideas, Ella," he said, "you ought to live in America."

"When Beatrice goes back to New York I shall take bag and baggage and go with her; meanwhile, au revoir," Ella cried and drew Beatrice after her.

"One word, Ellinka," said Epstein.

"What is it, papa? Say it quickly, we are late," she said laughingly.

"The de Lacks are at the Hotel de l'Europe," he whispered, "Waldeck and his father will probably be at the bank at noon; it would do no harm if you could be thereabouts about that time."

"It would not harm me, although it might hurt the bank; the Count might not desire to do business at a bank that is overrun by females," she said and stepped into the carriage.

Epstein gazed at the fast disappearing vehicle and thought how clever his daughter was, and what a fine Countess she would make, and how his own chances for the successful realisation of his dream would be enhanced if that were so. He gave no thought to the possibility that Waldeck

might already be in love with another woman and that woman the very girl who, he was happy in the thought, was in love with the Professor's nephew.

He ordered his carriage and was soon on his way to the bank.

As his carriage turned a corner he saw an open barouche in which four persons were seated. They were the Count and Countess de Lack, Waldeck, and a very beautiful woman.

The sight so affected him that the cigar nearly fell from his lips; in the beautiful woman he thought he recognised none other than Beatrice Rosen.

He barely managed to get into his private office. Then he sank down in one of the big leather-covered chairs, overcome with bewilderment.

CHAPTER VII.

A REVELATION.

It must be borne in mind that Epstein was a nervous man. His cares were great and growing, and under these conditions nerves wear out and the whole system becomes affected. Epstein had worn out his nerves, and when overcome by excitement neither saw nor thought as clearly as he used. He did not stop to think that it was physically impossible for Beatrice to be in the carriage that had passed him; and his sight was equally at fault, for, catching only a momentary glimpse, he did not see that it was the Baroness Levanovska, and not Beatrice, who was with Waldeck. The chances are that, had he realised who it was, it would have distressed him just as much; but it would have seemed to him more rational and more explicable. He was angry, too. He thought he had seen Beatrice lean back in the carriage and laugh. As a matter of fact, the Baroness Levanovska had burst out laughing at Epstein's comic look of bewilderment, and that was what he had seen.

The Baroness was looking more beautiful than ever, and people with sharper eyesight than Banker Epstein might well have made his mistake in taking her for Beatrice Rosen.

Her health was completely restored; her desire to return to Warsaw was the sole reason of her

feigning an illness that induced her relatives to accompany her to Poland. No sooner was she on Polish soil and in the city of Warsaw than she appeared to have recovered her health as if by magic. The Countess cautioned her to be careful, but Amanda only laughed.

"The best remedy for a Pole is Poland," she said; "I feel so strong that I cannot believe I was ever ill."

She was in a happy mood and as the carriage rolled along she threw silver coins to the beggars.

Of a sudden her mood changed.

"Let us go back to the hotel; I feel tired," she said.

"Very well, my dear," said the Countess. "Your uncle and I want to do some shopping; Waldeck, dear, try and entertain Amanda."

"I shall try, but with what success I cannot tell; women are capricious," he said.

"What has made you cynical?" Amanda asked.

"You, by spoiling our delightful drive," he said.

"Oh, is that all?" Amanda retorted.

"You little heathen, you have not even a grain of compunction about the matter," he cried.

"If by the matter you mean yourself, I have none; like bachelors all the world over, you are exceedingly selfish where women are concerned," said Amanda.

"Man must try to imitate his Maker," said Waldeck.

"You mean?" she cried.

"That with the Maker woman was an afterthought," he retorted with a laugh.

"Ah, see, our dear Commandant," cried the old Count, "he is coming to salute us."

The fat Commandant, leaving his companions, rode rapidly toward the carriage.

"Good day, your lordship; I kiss your hand, Countess," he said.

"Baroness Levanovska, permit me to introduce our dear Commandant, General Count de Fatoff," said the old Count.

The Baroness bowed.

"Your antagonist has asked for you, Count Waldeck; your friend has spent nearly two days with him. Well, I bid you good-day," he said and rode away.

"What has happened?" cried the Countess excitedly.

"Really, Dushka, you are as agitated as if this were my first affair. De Prussnitzki insulted cousin Beatrice and I fought him," was the calm reply. His words sounded to Amanda like the sweetest music. "They love each other," she thought; "thank God, she has no influence over Joseph."

"Why did you not tell us?" asked the Countess.

"I thought there was no hurry," said Waldeck.

"I think Waldeck did right," Amanda put in.

"Well, get out, you two," cried the Count, as the carriage halted in front of the hotel, "we will drive to the Lazienki; I want to consider what sort of punishment a young gentleman deserves

who keeps his parents in the dark about his affairs."

The words were accompanied with a tender smile, and as the carriage rolled away he threw a kiss to the son who filled him with a pride for which he had no words.

As soon as they had reached her apartments Amanda subjected Waldeck to a strict examination on every detail of the duel, and he, forgetting the agonies he had suffered from his jealousy, spoke in glowing terms of Joseph's goodness.

"Few people have better proof of that than I," said Amanda in a low voice as if speaking to herself. "He is as unassuming now as he was when a poor lad in Dobrzyn."

"In Dobrzyn?" cried Waldeck.

"Yes; I knew him there. He was in some slight measure identified with our movement," she answered.

"Do you know the importance of the revelation you have made to me?" cried Waldeck.

"I can see nothing particularly important in it," she said.

"Why, it means that Joseph is the long lost cousin of the Rosens," he cried.

"I knew it the moment I saw him in Warsaw," she rejoined.

"But neither Joseph nor Beatrice are aware of their relationship," he said.

"You love her, do you not, Waldeck?" asked Amanda almost pleadingly.

"Madly," he responded.

"And she?" asked the Baroness, and a pang shot through her heart.

"I do not know. Who can tell anything about a girl like her? But I love her, Amanda, I love her," he cried.

"I wish from the bottom of my heart that you may win her. I was not always favourably inclined toward her; first came the affair with the estate, then—well, no matter, since you love her, count on me to help you."

"How can you help me?" he asked dejectedly.

"Let me tell her; it will bring us more closely together. By the way, De Prussnitzki met Joseph in Dobrzyn, and, I believe, cordially hates him. Joseph once spoiled an amour for him. You remember Dr. Lerko? He had a daughter whom De Prussnitki ruined. Now she is in a convent."

"Good God!" cried Waldeck. "Now I understand why he was so shocked at Joseph's appearance. I saw the beginning of the affair from one of the upper windows of the flower house. Now that I think of it, I fancy the way Joseph spun him around was sufficient punishment. However, I was so maddened at the affront to Beatrice, that I thought only of chastising the offender. When I got down, Joseph and the ladies had disappeared and De Prussnitzki was dusting his clothes with his handkerchief. Joseph had put the girls in a passing drushki and returned—it is unbelievable—to beg De Prussnitzki's pardon."

"Waldeck, dear, tell me, they would not con-

demn me, would they?" she asked, laying both hands on his arm.

"Amanda, you——!" he cried, and as the knowledge dawned on him his face reddened with delight. "I cannot tell you how happy this makes me. Condemn you! Most certainly not. I do not think a soul in this city regards him as a Jew. Only about a year ago the Prince desired to have the Professor created hereditary Baron if Joseph would take the title after him, but he refused."

"Thank you," said the Baroness, pressing his hand.

"I shall at once go to the Epsteins and tell Beatrice," cried Waldeck.

"Please do not. Let us go there to-morrow and both enjoy the effect of the surprise," said the Baroness.

However, in the morning came an invitation to the de Lacks to dine at the Professor's house, so the plot had to be deferred until Sunday.

Amanda went to her room to muse over her happiness; a great gladness filled her heart.

"I shall love her for the love she bears Waldeck," she said, "and he, my Joseph, will bless me for it."

Meanwhile Waldeck directed his steps to Epstein's bank, where he expected to meet his father. At the door he was met by the banker himself who, evidently ill, was going home.

"What is the trouble, Mr. Epstein? You do not look well," said Waldeck.

"I am rather poorly; I feel the heat very much. Is there anything I can do for your lordship?"

"Nothing in particular; I thought I might find my parents here, but I suppose they will be here later in the day, so I will call again. By the way, Mr. Epstein, the Baroness Levanovska and I hope to have the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow; she is very desirous of seeing Miss Rosen, whom she met at Dobrzyn. You know they are really relations, and look enough alike to pass for sisters," said Waldeck.

Epstein felt as if he had received a sudden blow. In a moment he saw his mistake of the morning, and with the knowledge his pulses began to throb.

"Then it was the Baroness who was with you this morning?" he cried.

Waldeck, thinking that the banker had noticed Amanda's outburst of laughter, rather diffidently affirmed the fact. Epstein, on his part, took Waldeck's manner for indifference to his cousin Amanda, and felt so happy that he could have embraced "the dear Count". He bade Waldeck *au revoir* and went home. He was but little put out by the fact that Ella had not come to the bank as he had suggested and mentally prepared a lecture for her on the subject of "Lost Opportunities".

When he arrived at home his wife told him that Ella had sent word that she and Beatrice had gone to Professor Horovitz's house.

"To the Professor's house!" he cried, "and I told that little, that little——"

"Please, Alphonse, don't excite yourself. Let them go there, they are quite safe," said Mrs. Epstein.

"But this is downright rebellion! These modern young women are hard to manage; I must have a serious talk with our dear daughter."

At that moment the door opened and Ella rushed in. Her eyes were red from weeping and, throwing herself on her father's breast, she burst out crying.

"What is the matter? Where is Beatrice?" cried both.

"At the Professor's house. A cart ran into our carriage at the corner of Moscow Street and Beatrice was hurt," Ella sobbed.

For a moment Epstein was too dazed to speak, then he rang the bell and ordered his carriage.

"To Professor Horovitz," he cried.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MIRACLE.

"By St. George, I am a lucky man. Ten minutes ago I saw the most beautiful girl in Poland and now I meet the best man on earth," cried Merau, taking Joseph's arm.

"I shall not question your taste in matters of beauty, but as to the other, I think your emotion masters your judgment," Joseph rejoined.

"He who does the most good is the best man," said Merau sententiously.

"Provided the good done springs from pure motives and that the doer is not otherwise weak. Who is there that could stand in perfect righteousness before the all-seeing eye of God?" said Joseph.

"I know one such; but can you guess who was the woman to whom I had the pleasure of showing your picture?"

"Miss Rosen?"

"Exactly; and just think of it, she told me that it does not do the original justice," said Merau.

"Pan Jean, I want to ask a great favor, and although the request may seem presumptuous, the desire that you may grant it is so keen that I will make it," said Joseph.

"Speak, I will do your bidding, no matter at what cost," said Merau.

"Let no one see my portrait while I am alive."

"Do you know what the granting of this request means to me?" asked the artist with trembling lips. "It is the best work I have done or am capable of doing. Do you know what this means to an artist?"

"It means the sacrifice of vainglory. It cannot mean the sacrifice of your artistic life. Like everyone you think that you are encouraged by public praise. That is the small side of the artist. The large and imperishable side of the artist is his pure love for art; when praise or blame come from within; when he does his work to please his soul and to give expression to the intricate and delicate workings of his mind. I lately was looking at some paintings by Velasquez; there was an artist who did not consider what people might think of his work! Every subject that seemed to his fancy to be worthy of his brush was portrayed by him with the same love for art, the same fineness of conception and the same delicate shading. The results are marvelous. Such work, so conceived and executed, makes mankind happier," said Joseph.

"But is not the artist bound to expose his work to the eye of the world if he would have the world benefit by it?" asked Merau.

"Undoubtedly, and I do not ask you to hide your work for all time; only while I live, Pan Jean, only while I live."

"You will outlive me by half a century!"

"It is possible; but men have died younger than I."

"But what possible harm can it do to anyone or to you, if people see your picture?" asked Merau.

"Harm!" said Joseph in response, "I was not thinking of that; but my uncle spoke about the picture to my mother and she did not care for the subject that it represented, and I must do nothing that might offend my mother's feelings. I know you will do nothing to hurt either her feelings or mine."

"Never!" cried Merau, grasping Joseph's hand. "Look, look! The stupid, the idiot! if he does not make a sharp turn he will run into that carriage. Ah, I thought so."

Even as the artist spoke there was a crash and a shriek, the horses went down, kicking, and in a moment a crowd surrounded the scene of the accident.

"Come, Pan Jean, we may be able to lend assistance," said Joseph, and both strode rapidly toward the scene.

The crowd stood like a solid wall around the men who were trying to unharness the fallen horses.

Merau called out in his big voice to make way for the doctor, but as the crowd was unyielding, Joseph cried:

"Through them, Pan Jean."

They heaved their shoulders against the mass of humanity and then the people fell back.

In a moment Joseph was by the carriage.

"Oh, Mr. Horovitz, help us," cried Ella.

"Be calm, Miss Epstein, we will do our best. Are you hurt?" he asked.

"No; but I think Beatrice is. She has fainted."

"Put a few drops of this on your handkerchief and hold it to her nostrils, it will revive her," he said, giving her a small phial. "Here, Pan Jean, let us push back the carriage."

When the carriage was free from the struggling horses, Joseph took Beatrice in his arms and carried her to a drushki that Merau had hailed and told the coachman to drive to the Professor's house.

Having placed Ella by Joseph's side, Merau sprang onto the box and away they went.

Beatrice, who had regained consciousness, lay in Joseph's arms like a tired child. Now and then a groan escaped her lips, but she suppressed the pain in the delicious feeling that filled her heart.

Joseph's thoughts were not with her. He was thinking of the time when another woman, a woman who had taught him the first lesson of his great love, lay in his arms. How like she was to this girl, yet how different! What the difference was he did not know, nor did he care to analyse; he knew that, holding this one close to his heart, he would have given all in the world if he could have held the other there instead.

Ella interrupted his thoughts.

"Papa will die of fright," she sobbed.

"When we get to the house, send a note that

you and Miss Rosen are with us; later on you can explain," he rejoined.

The Professor's excitement was almost as great as Ella's. He had begun to think that Providence had sent this beautiful girl as a mate for Joseph and the injury to her unnerved him for a moment. However, he soon recovered and became quite cheerful when upon examination he found that she had only broken her arm.

"You have had great luck," he said. "A fracture of the left forearm is really nothing; and if you have no objection Joseph will put a plaster coat on your arm—to keep it warm," he added with a smile.

Beatrice smiled; despite her pain she was deeply grateful to the Professor for permitting Joseph to treat her. A little later, at Joseph's mere suggestion, she turned her face to the wall and went to sleep.

When Epstein came to the house he was surprised to find everyone in apparent calm and the Professor and Merau in the library having a quiet smoke.

"Why, gentlemen, you appear as if nothing terrible had happened," he cried, and sank into a chair.

"There is no need for alarm. A fractured arm is not a serious matter," said the Professor. "She is under the best of care and will be about in a few days."

"Are you sure that she is not otherwise hurt?" asked the banker.

"Quite sure," the Professor replied with a smile. "Now try to calm yourself," he added as the banker uttered groan after groan, wiping big beads of perspiration from his forehead.

"How can I, how can I? She was left in my care and now—and now——"

"It will all come right, Mr. Epstein," said Merau, rising. "If you will allow me I will accompany you; I am going your way."

Epstein felt grateful to Merau and leaned heavily on his arm as he descended the stairs.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COUSINS.

The news of the accident appeared in all the evening papers and on the following day many people left their cards at the Professor's house. Among those who called were the de Lacks and the Baroness, but no one was permitted to see the patient. Fever had set in toward noon on Sunday, and by the evening she was delirious. The entire panorama of events of the past few years moved before her fevered fancy, and through it ran the constant longing for the lost relatives.

"We must find them, papa, we must. They are so poor and we are so rich. Let us find them, papa, and give them all, all."

At midnight her temperature had reached an alarming height; the Professor and Joseph stood at the bedside, the former exceedingly grave, the latter gazing into vacancy, his lips moving as if he were communing with unseen beings.

Then the Professor put his hand on his arm and he turned with a start.

"If this fever continues it will be best to let Epstein telegraph for her father. She is not strong enough to stand this temperature," said the Professor.

Joseph shut his eyes for a moment.

"Tell them to boil some milk and bring it here," he said.

"Milk, in a fever!" cried his uncle, and looked keenly at Joseph. He thought the young man has gone mad.

"Yes, uncle, milk and a big bowl full," said Joseph calmly.

It was brought and Joseph administered a teaspoonful.

At first Beatrice demurred.

"Take it," said Joseph, and she obeyed.

One after another, teaspoonfuls of milk were taken, and then she drank from the bowl, quickly, eagerly, her burning hand resting on Joseph's arm; then she sank down on the pillow.

Joseph covered her with a feather coverlet. A few minutes later she broke into a profound perspiration and then fell asleep.

Half an hour later the Professor felt her pulse.

"A miracle, not the milk, has saved her life," he said in an undertone.

But Joseph appeared not to have heard. He stood by the bedside and with eyes shut and hands folded seemed to be in profound prayer.

The Professor felt something like awe before the power of this man who seemed to work miracles in defiance of all medical rules, and as he went from the room he felt for the first time in many years that he wanted to pray.

Joseph did not move from Beatrice's bedside. Once, during the vigil of that long night, he went to a corner of the room and, as in years gone

by, he prayed—prayed fervently that the young life might be spared.

Toward morning his mother entered and was surprised at the gladness that shone in his eyes.

"Mother," he said, "I have made a great discovery. She is one of us."

"My dear son," said Mrs. Rosen, misunderstanding his meaning, "I did not for a moment think she was a Gentile."

"No, dear mother, but she is our relation; she is uncle Max's granddaughter; her father's name is Howard and he now lives in Dobrzyn," he said. "She disclosed it in her delirium."

His mother was astonished beyond words. She took a step forward and looked at the sleeping girl, whose regular breathing was evidence of sound healthful rest.

"God grant that your words be true," said Mrs. Rosen. She also had come to the conclusion that the American girl had been sent by Providence as a wife for her son. "Let us pray that she may get well," she added.

At that moment Beatrice stirred, opened her eyes, and looked at Joseph, whose face was lit up by the morning light that streamed in at the window.

Suddenly her cheeks began to glow.

"Joseph, cousin," she cried, "I knew I would find you. You are Joseph Rosen, are you not?"

"I am Joseph," he answered.

"Ah, we have been searching everywhere for you. Papa will be so glad. How did you know

I was here? Where do you live?"

"You met with an accident and I came in time to assist you; you are in my uncle's house," he replied.

In a moment the scene of the accident was clear before her mind. Simultaneously also she knew the identity of this Joseph with the one she loved. The recognition nearly robbed her of her senses and she shut her eyes to recover the entire chain of wonderful incidents by which she had been led to know him and to love him.

Mrs. Rosen, thinking that Beatrice had lost consciousness, went to the bedside and put her hand gently on the girl's forehead. A deep sigh escaped Beatrice's lips and as she opened her eyes they were full of tears.

"Keep very quiet, my dear child," said Mrs. Rosen.

"And you are his mother?" asked Beatrice.

"Yes, dear; he is my own dear son," the other said in an undertone.

Beatrice took the woman's hand and kissed it.

"Don't do that," said Mrs. Rosen, bending down and kissing the girl's forehead. "Get well and strong and we shall all be very, very happy."

"Joseph!" cried Beatrice.

"Yes," he said, hastening to her side.

"You know, Baroness Levanovska and I are cousins."

"I know," he replied, and a great pain shot through his heart.

"I hope she will like you," said Beatrice.

Joseph breathed easier. She evidently knew nothing and was only concerned that her aristocratic relative should not behave amiss to this illustrious cousin.

"She is very proud and did not like me at first. Do you know her?"

"I know her," he said.

Further questions were prevented by the entrance of Professor Horovitz. He guessed that some kind of explanation had taken place.

"The cousins appear to understand each other," he said.

"Then you learnt it in the same manner as I did?" said Joseph.

"Yes, if you heard it from Waldeck, which is not likely, as you did not leave this room and he was not here last night," was his uncle's reply.

"Waldeck!" exclaimed Joseph. "How did he know?"

"From the Baroness Levanovska."

"I wish papa were here," said Beatrice.

"He has telegraphed that he will be here this afternoon; he saw Saturday's 'Courier' this morning, and I am glad of it; and now, if his daughter is very good and goes to sleep again, he will find her fit to receive him," said the Professor.

Beatrice smiled and, obeying the suggestion, was soon asleep.

In the afternoon Rosen was by his daughter's bedside, and the very first words Beatrice spoke, after they had greeted one another, were in refer-

ence to the identity of Joseph and his mother.

Rosen turned quickly and looked at them, then he went up to Mrs. Rosen.

"Then you are Aunt Bilah and this is your son Joseph?" he said.

"Yes, dear," was Mrs. Rosen's trembling reply.

"My dear, dear aunt, can you forgive us and the dead?" he cried, sinking on his knees.

"Please don't, my dear," said Mrs. Rosen, sobbing. "The past is forgotten."

"America has conquered us," said a voice. "Can we come in?"

"How are you, Waldeck, and you, Mr. Merau?" cried Rosen, stretching forth both hands.

At this point the Professor came in and peremptorily ordered them all into the next room.

"This little lady needs quiet," he said.

Howard Rosen's face beamed. He could not find words nor did he attempt to express his admiration for his cousin Joseph; and, short as the conversation was that followed on their leaving the sick room, it was long enough for him to make up his mind that Joseph and none other should marry his daughter.

Waldeck, who instinctively felt what was going on in the mind of the American, could scarcely conceal his bitterness, and the longer he stayed there the more he suffered. At length, unable to bear it any longer, he rose to go. He looked quite haggard and his voice trembled as he said,

"Good-bye, Uncle Howard, I must go. I am

glad to have been of some service to my dear cousin."

"You have my deepest and most lasting gratitude, Waldeck," said Rosen, shaking the young man's hand.

"Good-bye, Joseph; I am off to Italy or China or the Antipodes; it does not matter whither," said Waldeck.

A few moments later he and Merau were gone.

"Waldeck looks ill," said the Professor.

"He loves Beatrice," Joseph rejoined.

"Do not think of such a thing," cried Rosen.

"He fought a duel for her sake," said Joseph.

"He is her cousin and, believe me, Beatrice's accident affected him," said Rosen.

"I do not believe in accident when I see the work of Providence. I should be a bad friend if I were to let Waldeck go away full of grief," said Joseph.

"But he is a Gentile," cried Rosen.

Joseph had already left the room, and Rosen's words, in which there was a note of despair, were answered by the Professor, who advised him not to take that line of argument with Joseph.

"He has argued us out of the field long ago."

"Then you have discussed it with him?" asked Rosen.

"Thoroughly; sister dear, go and speak to him," said the Professor.

Howard Rosen sat and gazed in a dazed way at the door when his aunt had gone. He could not grasp the strange phase of character with which

he had now been brought into contact. He pitied Joseph, his mother, the Professor, himself, and above all his own daughter, who appeared to have a love for this Joseph that bordered on worship. Did she also feel that the man she loved rejected her?

The question suddenly leaped up in Rosen's mind. He rose, and without a word went into the adjoining room.

When Beatrice saw his pale face she felt that the past few minutes had wrought a change in her life.

"Joseph says that Waldeck loves you," was all he said.

Beatrice answered with a sob.

CHAPTER X.

WALDECK'S RESOLVE.

"Vladislav, hurry after Count de Lack and ask him to return; I want to see him," said Joseph, and he went into the library where he found his mother.

A few minutes later Waldeck joined them.

"You wish to see me?" he asked.

"On a matter of importance. Ah, mother dear, leave us; I will be with you in a few minutes," said Joseph, and putting his hands on her shoulders he bent down and kissed her.

She threw her arms around his neck and began to cry.

"Little mother, do not cry. You have been my strength all my life, be so now," he said.

"My dear, dear son," she sobbed.

"Be brave, dear mother," he said, and led her to the door.

She gave him a long, beseeching look, and then went away.

"Waldeck, you love Beatrice," said Joseph.

"I did love her; but that is all passed," Waldeck replied, looking down.

"You cherish the idea that if I were not in the way you would gladly recall the past and try to win my cousin, I ought to say, your cousin, for your relationship is closer than mine. At all

events you would not leave the field so ignominiously," said Joseph, looking Waldeck straight in the face.

"If it were only your love for her, Joseph, I am free to confess that I would not leave the field; but she loves you and no man can defeat a woman's love; there would be no honour in the conquest."

"You are almost a Jew in your manner of yielding to suffering," said Joseph with a smile.

"I am yielding to logic. I am yielding, with an ill grace, to a fact which I am powerless to change. You are the ideal of Beatrice's dreams; she loved you long before she knew me. Then, too, she is a Jewess, and for this reason alone I must give up all thoughts of an alliance with her," said Waldeck, his lips quivering as he spoke.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour nor against thyself," said Joseph.

"Do not torture me," cried Waldeck, and sinking into a chair he covered his face with his hands.

"Torture you?" said Joseph, putting his hand on his friend's shoulder. "Teach you, you should have said. Can you not conceive, my dear Waldeck, that I may have as much selfishness in my composition as the rest of my fellow creatures? Can you not conceive that I may desire to enjoy an unspoilt bachelorhood?"

"I can imagine nothing of the sort. Whoever heard of a man trying to reason himself away

from a treasure for the possession of which men would give their lives?" cried Waldeck.

"Whoever heard of a man trying hard to allow another to take the very treasure which he himself is dying to possess?" was the reply.

"Beatrice loves you," said Waldeck.

"You love Beatrice."

"Against the wish of every one who has or cares to have a voice in the matter. There are a thousand difficulties in my way; there is not one in yours," said Waldeck.

Joseph was silent. Notwithstanding the love he bore Waldeck, he could not bring himself to disclose to him the secret that his heart held. In him dwelt the spirit of his race, the strong, passionate spirit that prompts men to die for their love; but with it went the diffidence begotten by that mixture of pride and fear which constitutes the real secret why the Jews have survived stronger and braver races. The pliant is a greater power than the unbending; one may defy and break, the other yields and recovers. If Joseph told him that he loved Amanda, Waldeck might embrace him and wish him luck, but it was also possible that he might look at him and coldly say, "You mean the Baroness Levanovska!" It was this that he dreaded.

Waldeck for his part was under the impression that Joseph was considering the advisability of yielding to him, and taking as his wife the girl who appeared so well fitted. Joseph, he thought, could not fail to see the advantage of

such a union. But although he had pleaded with Joseph as he did, the thought of what it would mean to him caused him the keenest pain.

"Well, I must go; I—I shall try to seek forgetfulness in travel," he said, rising.

Joseph started.

"Do not go; do not travel. It would serve no purpose; neither yours nor mine," said he.

Waldeck heaved a deep sigh.

"You must stay," Joseph continued, "for many reasons; principally to help me out of an uncomfortable situation. My affection for Beatrice does not exceed that of a relation. You tell me that I am a callous person not to appreciate so beautiful and good a woman as she is, I will reply that each man loves the woman with whom he is in keenest sympathy, and that, though I do not love Beatrice Rosen, it is not impossible that I may love another equally worthy. However, even if I loved as passionately as you do, I must not yield to the sweetness of it. I must not entertain any thoughts of love or marriage, for I am even now preparing for a great struggle with a dreadful enemy. Before this month is over cholera will be raging here. Symptoms of it have already appeared in the lower part of the town, and my work lies there; my life must be devoted to nothing else. Beatrice will be well in a week; take her away and may you find the happiness you deserve."

He stretched forth his hand to Waldeck with a grace that was irresistible.

However, a great revolution of feeling had taken place in Waldeck's heart while Joseph spoke. He appeared to himself a weak, sentimental creature by the side of this strangely strong man.

"I will stay," he cried, grasping Joseph's hand, "but not to woo and win Beatrice; if God will spare our lives there will be time enough for that. I will stay to be by your side. There are no horrors so great that I would not brave them with you. If there is work, let me share it; if there be dangers, let me face them."

"It is well, brother," said Joseph, shaking hands with his friend. "By the way, how is the Baroness Levanovska?"

Waldeck started violently. He suddenly recalled what Amanda had told him. His heart gave a leap. Now he understood why Joseph refused to feign love for Beatrice.

"She is very anxious to see you," he said, scarcely able to suppress his exultation. "You are old friends, I understand."

"The Baroness has honoured me; I hope she will go away. Tell her that there is danger," said Joseph.

"She will stay," was Waldeck's reply. A moment later he had gone and Mrs. Rosen came into the room.

"How is Beatrice?" Joseph asked almost joyously.

"I trust nothing will happen to cause a relapse," his mother replied.

"Our strength comes from God. Now I must go and see some of my poor patients. I will see our cousin in the evening," he said.

He embraced his mother and went away.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DREAM.

Mrs. Rosen sighed deeply.

"Father in heaven, save him from harm," she murmured, and as she rocked herself in the chair the tears streamed from her eyes.

"What is the matter, sister?" asked the Professor who had come in unobserved.

"Oh, Daniel, my heart is heavy," she sobbed.

"What is the trouble?" he asked, stroking her hair.

"I did hope Joseph would marry, but his mind is only set on the poor and the sick from morning till night," she said.

"Let us hope for the best. I think this American girl will make him to forget everything except her wishes," said the Professor with a laugh, but there was no gladness in his voice.

Meanwhile Howard Rosen was discussing the same subject with his daughter.

"What new trials are in store for us?" he said. "By your letters I judged that he loved you."

"So he does; I knew it the moment I saw him in Mr. Merau's studio. Our souls belong to each other," she said with infinite sweetness.

"Then what did he mean by what he said about Waldeck? What is this new turn of affairs? Am I so worldly that I cannot grasp the greatness of

this young man's character, or is the whole thing an outcome of a deranged mind, fanaticised by its environments, driven by cruel conditions into a self-abnegation that seems like madness? I can scarcely believe my ears. Where shall I find one who so fulfils the prophetic vision of my father?" cried Howard Rosen.

"There is none like him in all the world," said Beatrice. "But come what may, I will do as he bids me."

Howard Rosen felt like one in a dream, so unreal did it all appear to him. Was this to be the fulfillment of his daughter's fate? Was she to fall a victim to the illusions of a dreamer? He was not the man to shirk a duty, and it seemed to him that he must fight for his daughter's happiness at whatever cost, at whatever sacrifice.

However, he saw no way to attack the enemy. Joseph could not be bribed. His uncle's vast fortune was at his disposal; the millions of the American would be no temptation to a man of Joseph's character.

"What shall I do? What power shall I employ to avert this awful misfortune?" he cried.

"We must trust to God to show us the way, papa," said Beatrice with tears in her eyes.

"My God, what have I done to merit all this?" cried her father.

"You have talked too much to this little girl," said the Professor who had overheard his last words on entering. "She needs quiet. Go to

your aunt whom you will find in the library, and I will stay with this naughty patient who has disobeyed orders."

Rosen kissed his daughter and left the room.

"My dear child," said the Professor, "you will have to fight for your happiness and for the happiness of us all. You must therefore try and get well. No excitement, no tears. Take this and go to sleep."

As he gave her the medicine she pressed his hand.

"Watch over him," she whispered.

"He is watched over by a power higher than ours. Now try to sleep," he said, placing his hand gently on her forehead. Under its soft caress she closed her eyes and soon fell asleep.

And sleeping she dreamed.

It seemed to her that she was in a vast hall, lighted by great, gleaming jewels suspended from the vaulted ceiling.

She saw the tall, majestic form of her grandfather, and by his side her mother, an angel of wondrous fairness, long tresses of hair falling over her shoulders and her eyes filled with sparkling tears.

On the floor lay a shrouded form around which played a halo of light.

The shrouded form arose and looked at her, and she saw that it was Joseph.

He pointed to a great throng of people who were in the background and said:

"These are my charge."

And from amidst the throng stepped forth one whose face was radiant with light and in whom she recognised Waldeck.

Walking by Waldeck's side was a woman lovely to behold, on whom her grandfather and her mother smiled benignly. Beatrice saw that it was Amanda Levanovska, who meekly and humbly knelt before Joseph.

Then she heard Waldeck's voice saying,

"Cast her not off, my Lord; she loveth thee."

And from the farthest ends of the great hall there came back the echo, "she loveth thee, she loveth thee."

At this a great pain seized the heart of Beatrice and she cried out, "Mercy!" But the hand of her mother was laid caressingly on her shoulder and the voice of her grandfather said, "Peace!"

Joseph laid his hand on the head of Amanda and said,

"Verily, so great a love have I not found in all the world as thine, and I have chosen thee from the midst of all the creatures on this earth to be by my side forever. Follow me, for I love thee."

And then he bent down and kissed her forehead.

At this the face of Amanda shone as in a great glory, and looking up to Joseph, she cried:

"I will follow thee, my Lord, my Redeemer."

Then Joseph turned to Beatrice and to her he said,

"I love the pure in heart. Be obedient to the

law of God, which is love, and let Waldeck be thy guide through this earthly life."

Joseph raised up the kneeling form of Amanda and led her away and the dream picture vanished.

When Beatrice opened her eyes and saw her father, she said,

"Be kind to him; he is to be my guide through this life."

"Who?" cried her father.

"Waldeck," was the reply.

Rosen was thoroughly bewildered; he could not grasp the threads of this mystery.

CHAPTER XII.

"I HAVE BUT ONE LIFE TO LOSE."

The great city of Warsaw was overcast with gloom. What Joseph had foreseen had come to pass. The cholera was raging in all its malignant fierceness.

Deserted streets, empty houses, locked doors, and barred windows told a gruesome tale of calamity.

The church bells at first rang out their plaintive appeal for some souls that were passing to their last home; soon, however, even these sounds ceased. There were no sextons to toll the bells and but few priests to read the service; most of them had fled for their lives.

The cholera was there; death was stalking in the streets. At times the Destroyer cut with his scythe a wide swath and hundreds fell in a moment. At times he picked off his victims one by one. Some the grim shadow seemed to catch by the neck and to choke by degrees. Then they writhed and swelled and turned black and gave up their lives with a shriek.

The rich, forsaken by their servants, ran into the street wild-eyed, begging a stray passer-by for help, for a doctor.

The passer-by uttered a cry of horror and ran,

leaving the other to writhe on the ground, only to be overtaken himself a few paces farther on.

A man, decked as for a féte, rushed up to a cab driver and, throwing a handful of gold into the man's hat, begged to be driven out of the town. But while he had one foot on the carriage step he was suddenly caught by the invisible enemy; he uttered a cry and fell.

The driver threw away the gold, sprang upon his seat and raced off. At the next corner he fell from the seat and the horse ran on with the carriage until it dashed into a granite monument and was killed.

Women of all ranks, pressing their infants to their bosoms, ran wildly through the streets crying for help, and fell with cries of agony.

In every street, in every square, were the dead; some lying on their backs, stretched straight on the ground, their lifeless eyes staring up to the merciless sky. Others, doubled up, their heads between their knees; others leaning against a wall or a tree or a crucifix, seeming as if they had been transfixed.

The streets were like a battlefield where men and women had fallen fighting an invisible and cruel foe.

In the Sigismund Square, whither many had gone because of its cleanliness and elevation, the sight of the stricken and frightened people was pitiful in the extreme. They begged for help, crawling on their knees and following "the

White Brigade," as the few devoted helpers in this terrible disaster were called.

"The White Brigade" had been organized by Joseph. It was bound by no rules or regulations; it had not even assumed a name. Its title was bestowed by the people whom the wonderful powers of the leader had saved from death.

No one really knew who the helpers were, and no one cared. The few that thought and spoke of the matter, vowed that they had seen the Saviour in person.

The Helper, like the little band that accompanied him, was cloaked in white. He but rarely spoke. He acted. At times he directed the different members of the band, calling out a name and pointing to a certain case to which the one or the other would give particular attention. The Band needed but little direction. Each member was working with the intelligence and the inspiration that fitted him or her for the great, self-sacrificing work. Here was Waldeck carrying a man to the temporary hospital; there De Prussnitzki, pale and haggard, was giving medicine to an old man. Ella Epstein, Beatrice and her father, the Professor and Baroness Levanovska and others who followed in the wake of the illustrious young leader, were working enthusiastically and diligently against the terrible enemy.

A short distance from the Sigismund monument lay a man whose face and hands were disfigured by frightful sores, and his body was

swollen to a horrible size. His head had fallen back and his breathing was stertorous. The flies had settled on his face and a woman, the Baroness Levanovska, was bending over him and fanning them away.

Suddenly the voice of the Professor called out, "Away, move off quickly; this man is leprous."

"Beatrice and you, Amanda, go home to rest," said Joseph.

Howard Rosen at once led away his daughter, but Amanda made no move to go.

Joseph took her arm and led her away from the contaminated spot.

"You are not very strong and it were best that you go to our house and rest," he said.

"Oh, do not drive me away, Joseph; I have but one life to lose and if something should happen to you I must be by your side," she said, tears streaming down her cheeks.

Joseph pressed her hand.

"May God bless you," he said and turned to lend assistance to one of the distressed.

"God has blessed me already, my dear love, for He has turned your great good heart to me," she whispered, and went to work as if she had been endowed with new strength.

Although the work of mercy went on, still Death reaped a rich harvest, and as the days passed it seemed as if the entire population would fall by the unseen sword.

Jews and Christians offered up fervent prayers to God in their various houses of worship; the

Christians prayed that God stay the hand of Death and the Jews prayed that God might keep the plague from them; the latter curiously enough, had so far been spared, a fact that did not remain unnoticed and which excited the fear-stricken and superstitious people to madness.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THE GREATER CALAMITY HAS COME."

In front of the great cathedral that faces the Saxon Square a large number of people were gathered. Some were kneeling and counting their beads, while others held large crosses, crucifixes and such processional church paraphernalia as the Bishop had ordered.

They were forming into a long line; for it was to be the greatest procession the city had ever seen, and a liberal sprinkling of holy water was promised.

"No doubt holy water will do good," said one of a group of sullen-faced men, "but if we could rid the city of the accursed Jews it would be better; they brought the plague upon us. Hey, Carolu, did not the Jews bring the plague upon us?" he cried.

"Don't ask him, he is the coachman of the Jewish doctor and he is half a Jew himself," said another.

"As I love God, Mat Grabovski, you are an ungrateful dog; my young master saved your wife's life and paid your rent when Bednarski, the smith, wanted to throw you out of your hovel," said the coachman.

"You are a liar if you say that it was your master, whom I do not know and whom the

saints confound; I know that it was the Pan Christ himself who came to our house last Christmas and cured my wife and gave us money," Grabovski retorted.

"Mat speaks the truth; what Jew would give a Catholic money and save his life? We ought to rid the city of the Jews and the plague at the same time and the Pan Christ will help us."

"True words. We ought to pay them back for what they did to our Lord."

"As I love God, brothers, let us do it tonight," whispered Grabovski.

At this moment a bell was sounded and the Bishop in the gorgeous vestments of his sacerdotal office, holding aloft with both hands a golden crucifix, made his appearance. He was followed by the sacristan with golden staff and by priests and acolites in red and white.

At the sight of the Bishop the people fell on their knees. The sacristan intoned a hymn, the bells tolled and the procession moved on.

Grabovski and his friends kept up a lively conversation planning a massacre of the Jews and a division of the spoils that were certain to fall into their hands.

Suddenly Grabovski took hold of his companion's arm.

"Blood of Christ! Look, there is a Jew, standing in front of his house, and mocking us. See, he has not removed his filthy cap in the presence of the Sanctuary. At him, brothers; let us pull out his filthy beard."

They made a dash for the Jew. He was knocked over, beaten, kicked to death under their feet. The act was like the smell of blood to a ravenous beast and in a moment the erstwhile worshippers became a yelling mob of savages, that pressed forward to the Jewish quarter.

The Bishop attempted to restore order, he commanded the priests to speak to the people, but they had become uncontrollable, they were no longer like human beings.

Meanwhile, Carolu, the Professor's coachman, had rushed home and in short, halting speech told the professor of what he had overheard and what he feared.

"Where are they now?" asked the Professor.

"They are just forming in line and will march through the New Town," said Carolu.

"Call Vladislav," ordered the professor and hastily wrote a few words on a sheet of paper.

"Ride as fast as you can and give this note to the Commandant at Praga," he said to Vladislav.

The latter bowed and went out. In the hall he was met by Joseph who asked for the news of the day.

"Bad news, master, there is an attack upon the Jews."

"Now?" asked Joseph.

"It may be now," said Vladislav and hastened away.

"The greater calamity has come," said Joseph as he entered his uncle's room.

"De Prussnitzki's Cossacks will wipe them out," said the Professor grimly.

"One ought not to employ such means," Joseph rejoined.

"They are mad beasts and must be treated as such," said the Professor.

"Misery has made them mad, uncle; they are ill and need help; let us do what we can for both," said Joseph and he went to his own room whence he soon emerged clad in a long gray mantle.

"You do not mean to go among these infuriated animals?" cried the Professor.

"Do not fear for me, uncle. This is only another kind of epidemic, and I must not shirk the work," he said and went away.

Joseph crossed the Sigismund Square and was turning into a narrow street when he was hailed by Waldeck who ran up to him in evident excitement.

"An attack upon the Jews," he cried.

"I know it. Come," said Joseph, calmly.

"What will you do?" his friend asked.

"Save those that are more grievously stricken than by the cholera," was the reply.

"Ah, the poor Jews!" said Waldeck, as he walked by Joseph's side.

"Say not the poor Jews—rather say the poor, deluded, ignorant Christians—ah, the heart bleeds to call them by that respectable name—; but we must try to save them, Waldeck."

"But how? What can we, singlehanded, do

against a mob gone mad through superstitious fear?" asked Waldeck.

"It will not be much of an effort to calm them," said Joseph, "but those inclined upon bloodshed and pillage from motives of gain, will be harder to manage. However, we must not shirk the task. Behold, there they are."

It was Saturday afternoon; many of the Jewish people were in the synagogue attending a discourse being delivered by the Rabbi, while many of the young people of both sexes were promenading the street. They had no premonition of evil until the mob came rushing into the Nalevki. In a moment there were collisions, blows were struck and returned and ere long Jews and Jewesses were down, wounded and screaming for help. Several of the more courageous young Jews rushed into their houses whence they soon emerged with miscellaneous weapons. Knives, axes, sticks and stones were used by assailants and defendants alike and there were many of both creeds that sank down never to rise again.

But the attacking mob steadily increased and the majority of the fearstricken Jews sought shelter either in their houses, which they barred, or in the synagogue where in their agony they prayed loudly for help from God.

Meanwhile, the battle in the street was going on. A stout ruffian grabbed an old Jew by the beard and clubbed him. Waldeck drew his rapier and wanted to rush at the fellow.

Joseph held him back.

"Thou shalt not kill!" he said.

Waldeck felt almost annoyed at Joseph's composure. He could not understand it. How was it possible at such a supreme moment? But Joseph did not give him time to cavil; he drew him into an alley and walking rapidly they came to the back entrance of the synagogue.

Joseph knocked loudly at the door, a wicket was shoved aside, a blanched face peered through, then the door opened and both Joseph and Waldeck slipped in.

Joseph made his way to the nave of the synagogue and going up the chancel he cried loudly to the people to be calm, as a regiment of military was on the way to disperse the mob. His words might have calmed the people, but for the stones that were hurled through the windows one of which struck the aged Rabbi who sank down with a groan.

The rioters were equally active at the shut doors and the frequent and combined rushes made it obvious that it was but a question of minutes when the doors would yield, thus delivering the defenseless people to the savagery of the infuriated mob.

Joseph saw that heroic action was required to save the people.

"Come," he said to Waldeck, "let us speak to those outside; it will be easier to quiet the others than these here."

Waldeck made no response; he followed the master whom he now served. They pressed

through the crowd and finally got to the front door. But the besieged would not yield. To open the door meant death to all, they said.

Joseph's earnestness, however, carried weight, and in the end the men yielded.

Waldeck suddenly pushed the door wide open and Joseph, offering himself as a sacrifice for his people, stepped into the entrance. He raised his hands and, with a voice, powerful in its resonance, cried out,

"In the name of God, brother, let us have peace!"

The mob fell back, awe-struck at his appearance.

"My God," cried several, "it is the Pan Christ!"

"Go home, good friends; tend the sick and be merciful to the unfortunate and God will be with you!" said Joseph.

"At them, brothers," voices from behind cried. "Kill the Jews! Kill the Jews!"

They made a sudden rush. A ruffian raised his knife and made a savage lunge at Waldeck, but Joseph pushed his friend aside and in a moment all was confusion. A few moments later a sotnia of Cossacks came upon the scene and the mob dissappeared as if swept away by a cyclone.

Professor Horovitz had not ventured to keep his nephew back, because there was always that indefinable something in the latter's acts which disarmed criticism and forbade interference; but he regretted that he did not keep him from this

dreadful errand. He was sad and full of trepidation. How if the man whom he loved as his own life should suffer harm or be killed!

He thought of his own past, of the joyless years he had spent until this rare character came to brighten his life. He thought of Joseph, whose soul was so lofty, whose mind so pure, whose acts so full of grace that the vilest became chastened by contact with him. He thought of the prodigal De Prussnitzki who had mended his ways and, at Joseph's bidding had risen from a bed of sickness to work with him among the stricken people; and his heart cried out in wild protest against a fate that threatened to crush him now as it had crushed him before and made his life lonely and miserable.

Then he seemed to hear Joseph's voice that said,

"Selfish griefs are as sinful as selfish joys. They attest to a weakness of which a man ought to be ashamed."

This suggestion from an inner consciousness had a calming effect upon him. It was much even to have known such a man as Joseph; he was his own kin, and if Providence would only spare his life then——

There appeared before his mental vision the entire chain of honours that in course of events came to Joseph. There was nothing to hinder his becoming the foremost man in all Russia if not in all Europe.

Thus the Professor sat for hours, devising,

planning and incidentally praying—not in words but in sighs—for Joseph, and with each sigh he felt a sense of impending disaster that increased to unbearable acuteness; there was a whirring in his ears that sounded like rushing waters, like the wail of the despairing, like the fierceness of the storm that blasts and levels all in its path. Suddenly, with a cry that echoed through the room, he sprang to his feet and faced the door.

It opened wide and some men entered carrying a body on a stretcher. The Professor saw at a glance that it was Joseph, then something shot into his brain, all became dark and he sank down.

"Here, Vladislav," cried Merau, "don't howl like a mad dog, lend a hand and let us carry him on to the sofa."

The Professor almost at once regained consciousness and sprang to his feet.

"What has happened?" he cried.

"Compose yourself, Daniel; it is nothing serious; they were struck, he and Waldeck, I think, but it is nothing—no—thing,—Dan——"

Merau could not finish, sobs choked his voice.

The sight of the other's distress revived the Professor. He ordered Joseph and Waldeck to be taken into the adjoining operating room.

Waldeck, having come to himself, begged the Professor to attend to Joseph first; and then it was that the Professor drank the cup of bitterness to the dregs, for he saw that Joseph's injuries were fatal; the knife had almost split his

heart which was beating feebly and the life blood was draining away slowly.

"Can nothing be done?" cried Merau. "Oh, Daniel, where is your science?"

A strange light came into the Professor's eyes.

"Call in the doctors quickly; I will operate on him; I will sew up his heart; it is one chance against nine hundred and ninety-nine, but I shall take this one chance," he said.

Merau was already gone and a few moments later came back accompanied by the surgeons.

Joseph was laid on the table and the Professor himself cut the flesh without a quiver, and when the heart of Joseph was laid bare, the Professor set his jaws grimly, his whole mind concentrated on the wonderful work he was doing. The hand that held the needle and drew the thread through the parts between each pulsation was like steel; it worked with the precision of a delicate mechanism, sensitised by the touch of science.

When the operation was over his eyes flashed; the sewn up heart pulsated regularly and with slowly increasing strength.

"If nothing happens he will live," he said.

"He will live," said the surgeons in awed response.

Professor Horovitz sat in his big arm chair; in front of him stood Vladislav, who gave a report of what he had witnessed, his every word cutting the Professor to the heart, and filling his soul with unspeakable hatred for the bestial

creatures, who in all ages have committed murder in the name of a religion they did not understand, who did not deserve human treatment or liberty, to aid whom was not only a mistake, but a crime. He smiled grimly when Vladislav told how De Prussnitzki's Cossacks had ridden amongst them and trampled them down to the last man, so that this false people might no longer disgrace the name of the ancient Man of his own race. He hated them with a bitter hatred; for in his heart he feared that Joseph would not survive the shock.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE APOTHEOSIS.

Early in the morning after the accident, Vladislav entered the Professor's room and announced the Baroness Levanovska.

Thinking that she had come to see Waldeck, he bade her enter.

The Baroness was pale and her eyes were red from weeping.

"I could scarcely wait for daylight," she said. "How is he?"

"His lordship has but a slight wound and will be about in a day or two," was the rejoinder.

"I mean Joseph—your nephew," she said.

"He—" said the Professor sighing deeply, "who can tell?"

"Let me see him," she said pleadingly.

"Quite impossible, your ladyship," he rejoined.

"I must see him," she cried and her voice trembled.

"I am sorry, but no one except the doctors can enter his room," he said coldly.

"I beg of you—I beg of you—I must see him, my Joseph—or I shall die," she cried and sank down before him.

The Professor was taken aback.

"What—?" he cried.

"He is my life. I have loved him in Dobrzyn;

I have loved him through all these years. He has not thrust me aside; he loves me. My Joseph, my love. I want to see him. I cannot live, I will not live if he dies," she sobbed.

A sudden light, a sudden recognition of the mystery of Joseph's words and actions broke upon Dr. Horovitz' consciousness. Now he saw it all clearly, unmistakably; he recognized the full meaning of the tragic life and tragic end of his nephew. It was a fearful whim of fate; their lives had run on the same lines, with the same incidents, the same results. What a mockery of human happiness; what a stigma on the stupid faith that spoke of an eternally wise arrangement of human destinies! He laughed out loud; but it was not a laugh, it was a cry, and the sad woman at his feet knew that misery wrung it from him and her tears ran faster. Her grief gradually calmed the Professor. He saw that he must not permit misfortune to unman him. It was his duty to protect the poor creature whose love was so strong, so pure, so sorely tried. He put his hand on her head.

"My poor child; fate is very bitter and cruel and senseless.

"Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab,"

he quoted.

But the familiar lines wounded Amanda so deeply that she sprang up wildly.

"Do not say that he will die," she cried. "Do not say it. Heaven cannot be so cruel!"

"Be still, my child; heaven can be very cruel. I have experienced it myself," he said tremblingly. "Still, let us try to be brave. I would give my life gladly, willingly, if I could restore him to you. Compose yourself and come; you shall see him, but be very quiet."

He led her to the room where Joseph lay. He appeared to be sleeping. His face was white and looked, indeed, like the image of the Christ who, 'tis said, had borne a world's sorrow.

The Baroness sank down at the bedside. She kissed the coverlet and the pale, slender hand that lay on it. Agony convulsed her body, but she did not shriek; her own face, beautiful in its pallor, appeared stamped with the seal of death.

The Professor was profoundly moved and no longer made any attempt to keep back his tears.

At last he laid his hand gently upon Amanda's shoulder and lifting her up, led her into another room. There she sank upon her knees in speechless prayer. All day long she remained so. The Professor tried in vain to make her lie down or take some nourishment.

"Give him back to me, God; give me my Yushu," her lips murmured.

On the second day Joseph fell into a fever and then the Professor gave up all hope. He allowed Joseph's friends to gather in the adjoining room,

where they listened in breathless silence, eager for the least hint from the doctors who passed in and out.

The Baroness took no notice of the others in the room, not even of Waldeck, who had sufficiently recovered and desired to be near Joseph; she waited.

About noon on the fourth day of the fever, Joseph became conscious; his fine constitution appeared to have withstood the fearful attack.

"Let *her* and the others enter," he whispered to his uncle.

The latter did not wonder how he knew that anyone was in the adjoining room; he had long since learnt to be obedient to the gentle commands of his nephew. He only ventured to beg him to avoid excitement.

Mrs. Rosen joined in the prayer, but Joseph, turning his shining eyes on her, said,

"Sweet mother, I shall soon be well, why deprive me of my dear friends?" His voice seemed to gather strength as he spoke. Then turning to his uncle, he continued, "Let *her* come to my side; the mystery is solved——"

The Professor nodded and went into the adjoining room.

"He wants to see you, my child," he whispered into Amanda's ear.

She sprang up as if electrified.

"Come," he said to the others and all went into the room.

The Professor led Amanda to the bedside.

"Amanda," Joseph breathed.

"Joseph, dear love," she whispered and knelt down.

There was not the least doubt in the minds of those present that this was Joseph's farewell to his friends; but Professor Horovitz, even at that moment, would not give up hope, and begged Joseph not to speak much.

"Dear uncle," said Joseph, "I must say all I have to say now.

"Mother, you have been my honour and my strength. Do not weep for me, for I shall be by your side always. Your honour will be my honour in heaven.

"Uncle Daniel, I pray you to be stronger than your misfortune and do not permit any one to wear any outward sign of mourning for me. Keep up the stipends to my impecunious students and continue my allowances to the poor. At the end of each week let food be given to the poor regardless of creed."

There was incessant sobbing, but Amanda did not weep, grief had robbed her of tears; she listened spellbound.

"Cousin Howard, you have a clear understanding of what is right and best for all; work on bravely, and may you be blessed.

"Beatrice, Waldeck loves you. He is worthy the best your heart can give; love him.

"Jean Merau, you were a friend. In your soul dwells love for the pure and the beautiful;

may you be blessed. Keep guard over your friend and brighten his hours."

"Master, Master!" cried the artist and sank down on his knees; he was sobbing like a child.

"Waldeck, I love you," said Joseph with infinite sweetness.

"I know, I know," the other cried, "you raised your hand to shield me."

"That you might live to shield the woman God sent you," he said and a beautiful smile played on his face.

"Rest, Joseph, I beg of you," cried the Professor.

"I shall rest soon. I have but this one life on earth. Ah, who said that? It was you, Amanda. You would not yield; you would not leave the poor and the sick whom to serve you came down from your high station," he said and his hand was laid gently on hers. She took it, covered it with kisses and held it, her head reclining on the bed.

"Ah! how much there is to your credit, Amanda! Rachel and Yushu—and—Yushu," he whispered.

Amanda's soul seemed to expire and there was such a weight upon her heart that she cried out:

"Do not die, my love; do not die!"

"Those that love do not die," he said and his eyes shone with a wonderful light. Then the light gave way to a look of profound sadness.

"Which poem shall I read? Anyone I like? Well, then, this:

"Die holden Wuensche bluehen
Und welken wieder ab,
Und blueh'n und welken wieder,
So geht es bis ans Grab."

The words were uttered with touching pathos; the dulcet melody of his voice rose and fell with the same thrilling rhythm as when, years before, he had read to the Baroness at Castle Wysiniaski; that scene was passing before his mind's eye, and the last words passed from his lips like a prolonged trembling sigh.

Then a greyish pallor swept over his face, the hand that held Amanda's contracted, he opened his great luminous eyes once, then the lids fell as if in slumber.

L'ENVOY.

(Extract from a letter from Ella to Beatrice.)

"I can scarcely believe that it is nearly a year since Joseph and poor Amanda were laid to rest. Mr. Merau has at last consented to allow his work, both the portrait of Joseph and the death-scene, hung in the Art Gallery. I saw both pictures yesterday. Joseph is beautiful as the Christ, but the other made me shudder. I can never forget the horror I felt when it was found that Amanda had died almost at the same moment as Joseph. The picture is called, 'THE APOTHEOSIS.'

"As the de Lacks, yourself and your father are expected here the day after to-morrow for the anniversary of Joseph's death I might have waited and let you find out a piece of news that I have for you, but I have not the heart to let you wait, so I must tell you that I have at last fulfilled the long cherished hopes of my father and am about to marry an aristocrat and—please do not start—it is none other than Colonel de Prussnitzki, and I really think I love him. He has developed a splendid character and has won the affection of our dear Professor Horovitz and your aunt. Papa is quite happy. He really does not grudge you Waldeck, now that his daughter is going to a Count. You know I never grudged you your good fortune, and your happiness is my own. Au revoir,

"ELLA."

[FINIS.]

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